HUMANE RELIGION

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Frank Kingdon

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Frank Kingdon

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
TO
RICHARD H. SCOTT
AS A TOKEN OF APPRECIATION
OF HIS FRIENDSHIP

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PREFACE

THE object of this book may be simply and clearly defined in a sentence. It is to show how inextricably interwoven into the historical, intellectual, and practical pattern of the religion of Jesus is the ethical passion for the sacredness of human life.

The words "ethics" and "ethical" must be immediately safeguarded, for if we define ethics, as we sometimes do, in a cold-blooded sort of way as the science of values, then it may easily carry so anæmic and pedantic a connotation as to be outside of the character of Jesus altogether. But it need not be loaded down with any such handicap, for Jesus did for ethics what he did for everything else he discussed—he thought it through and humanized it.

The premise from which he approached the consideration of morals was that the whole sweep of man's dealings with man is the proper field of ethics. Any question became an ethical question with him when it involved human beings. His first intention in any transaction was the humane one. In his thought no question was rightly, and therefore finally, settled until every last human interest involved had been properly safeguarded. He insisted that human values took precedence over all others. That is the supreme contribution which he has made to the consideration of human conduct, and it gives his teaching its own distinction among systems of thought. It is the characteristic emphasis which makes his religion essentially and primarily an ethical adventure.

The trail of this humane emphasis through the story of the evolution of religion among the Jews, the career of Jesus himself, and the history and thought of Christianity since his times, is worth retracing, not only for the richer understanding it will bring us of the background of our faith, but also for the courage it will stir in us to walk more bravely in the paths we ourselves must tread.

FRANK KINGDON.

PART I

THE LIVING FLAME

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.—*John 15. 12.*

FOREWORD

When Jesus gave us his new commandment he hung a little lamp over it so that we could not possibly mistake its meaning. He might have said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another," and we should have acknowledged the beauty of his word, but in our own minds we should have had to concede that it was a little vague and ill defined. It was characteristic of him not to leave it that way. What he did say was, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." That last phrase is a little lamp hung over a great commandment so that we can read its meaning unmistakably. In the light of it we cannot possibly misunderstand what he meant.

This lucid speaking of Jesus is an invaluable asset of Christianity. He never was vague. He never sought to impress his hearers with the profundity of his thought by the obscurity of his language. Rather did he so present the noblest of conceptions that they became human and compatible with the humblest of minds and the most unpretentious of people. He made the common man at home in the most select circles of ideas. He opened for him the gates that led into the choicest preserves of the thinkers. What the common people had before received only from the hands of authority he made it possible for them to discover for themselves. It is no wonder that they heard him gladly.

The method by which he obtained such excellent results was simplicity itself. He took abstract ideas and put them into living pictures that his hearers understood. He spoke to every man in his own vernacular. Never did he preach general principles without a specific application of them to actual living conditions. He shod every message of his with rugged sandals and made it walk in the dusty roads of Galilee. To track that message to its sources and throughout its effects shall be our study here.

CHAPTER I

THE KINDLING SPARK

It is so easy for a casual observer to get a merely supernatural religion out of the pages of the Old Testament that we must begin by recognizing that the religion of the Old Testament finds its vitality in passion for human welfare rather than in supernatural experiences. Its striving for an adequate concept of God is so closely bound up with its struggle for human well-being that we are quite justified in saying, that every crisis in its development of an adequate idea of God was associated with the courageous facing of some definite moral problem. The profoundest insights into the nature of God came to those men who lost themselves most completely in some humane effort. Religious understanding came to these Old Testament worthies, not as a result of some capricious playing of favorites on the part of Jehovah, but because they were prepared for divine insights through their sensitiveness to human needs. Definitely awakened and aroused by their passion to correct some human wrong, they were ready for the richer appreciations of the nature of God which they achieved. Progress in the discovery of God kept pace in every man's life with his devotion to his fellow men, and it proceeded no faster and no slower than his ethical development. We have lost many insights into the Old Testament because we have failed to see with what tenacity it sticks to its insistence on the sacredness of human personality and the primacy of human values over all others. That emphasis sounds so clearly that we are not exaggerating when we say that it is the axis around which all its thinking revolves, and the very center of its interpretation of the character of God. The Old Testament is as clearly the story of man's progressive discovery of man as it is of his unfolding discovery of God. The two are inseparable in its pages. In this chapter we shall trace the parallel development of the ethical ideal and the concept of God in the Old Testament, trying to think of God in each case as the authors themselves thought of him.

I

The Patriarchs

We do not have to wait long for the consideration of the sacredness of human life to appear in the Old Testament. After its majestic prologue of the creation the book of Genesis immediately passes to the story of Cain and Abel. By the time we reach the fourth chapter of the book we are out of that rare epic atmosphere in which we were contemplating the wonder of the Creator bringing form out of darkness and void, and we are back again in the coarser air of this our world facing a human tragedy.

The story itself is familiar enough. The two boys were of different texture, so that life seemed gracious to Abel and rough to Cain. The profaner man could not look with equanimity upon the gentle happiness of his brother, whom life seemed to treat more tenderly than it did him. Envy possessed him and swept him on to unreasoning anger that spent itself in murder. The whole incident is as sordid as any of yesterday's crimes recorded in any of this morning's newspapers.

The telling of it, however, is different, for the writer of Genesis introduces a third party into the story. "And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?" There, right in the beginning of the book, you have the assertion that a human individual is worth so much to the universe that the God, whom but just now we saw busy with his work of creating the world, will stop his activity to inquire for one who is slain. It is a profound ethical insight which makes the author of this ancient book compel the first criminal in his story to face the question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" This is no chance emphasis slipping into this first story; it is the fundamental recognition of the sacredness of human personality as the foundation principle of moral conduct. Once and for all it asserts that the universe cannot be indifferent when that sacred principle is wronged. God does not deal lightly with those who wrong their fellow men. That is the inner meaning of the story of Cain's hate.

Even the story of Noah, with its apparently careless waste of human life, fits into the ethical structure of the Old Testament. Its first effect, naturally, is to dramatize the distinction between those who are pleasing in God's sight and those who are not. It serves as an ancient parable of judgment defining the value of the good life and the lostness of the evil life. That is its main purpose, and we recognize it as such. But it is worthy of note that in the Deluge Noah was saved; that is to say, God cared enough for the good man to save him, though the heavens fell. We must not be so carried away by the spectacular destruction of men that we fail to see the significance of the man who was saved. God does not forget the life that is worthy to be remembered. It is also to be noted that after the Flood the story says that God put the bow in the cloud as a token that never again would he as wantonly destroy men. The rainbow became to the author of this story the symbol of God's rediscovery of the sacredness of human life, the assurance that never again would even almighty anger be allowed to violate it.

The exaltation of human values becomes even more marked as we move into the stories of the patriarchs. Probably most of us would associate the beginning of the Hebrew religion with the experience of Abraham. He it was who left the land of his fathers and went out with his vision of Jehovah, not knowing whither he went. He began that quest for God which has been the lure and the pride of his descendants down to the present day. All those who walk by faith acknowledge him to be the father of the faithful.

His communion with God, however, did not stop with a mystical ecstasy, for he translated it into moral vision and power. It moved him to more than justice in his dealings with Lot. There is a profound ethical consciousness manifest in his remonstrance with his nephew, "Let there be no strife, . . . between me and thee, . . . for we be brethren." Such a plea goes to the very core of right dealing between man and man. Again, it was Abraham who confronted his visitors on their way to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah with the sublime question, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" His question marked his insistence that man, the moral creature, has a right to expect God to be at least as just as he himself would be. The Creator cannot evade the moral implications of his own creation. It is a swift moral insight that marks Abraham as one of the greatest of the prophets.

The most dramatic incident in his whole career is another which re-enforces the principle of the sacredness of human life. As he traveled among the people of Canaan he found them sacrificing their children to their gods. Such a practice could have but one effect on so religious a spirit as Abraham's—it challenged his own consecration. He wondered whether he loved Jehovah sufficiently to sacrifice to Him his beloved Isaac, in whom all his hopes centered. He found that he was ready, but in that same moment he understood that God did not desire the offering of human blood to him, that any personality was too precious in his sight for him to desire its destruction. That profound insight into the moral nature of God he fixed once and for all. From that day to this neither the Hebrews nor the Christians have indulged in human sacrifice as a rite of religion.

You cannot adequately understand the character of Abraham until you recognize the grandeur of these moral insights of his and their power in molding his own character. You certainly cannot rightly appraise his contribution to religion without including them.

Isaac is a placid soul without much contribution to make along any line. Yet we cannot pass him by without a reference to the idyllic story of his courtship of Rebecca, which abounds in unconscious acknowledgments of the potential lovelinesses of human love and life. There is at least no cheapening of the estimate of man in that sweet story.

Jacob is a different sort of man altogether, so that instead of the placidity of his father you find in him the storm of struggle. His is the story of a moral and spiritual regeneration. Smart and unscrupulous to begin with, he climbed a tortuous road to the eminence of a prince of God. He stands as the prototype of those who come to moral power as a result of inner struggle. Always in him was the wrestling between his meaner and his better self. His contributions to the unfolding conception of God grew directly out of that sore battle within him.

He made two important discoveries. When he left home to run away from Esau he thought that he was leaving his father's God behind. Like all his neighbors, he had conceived his god to be a tribal deity peculiarly the possession of his own family and confined to their tents. At Bethel he discovered that there were no such limitations to God; that he was not a tribal deity restricted as to time and place but one who went with his children everywhere. To Jacob we owe the discovery that wherever one of his children is, there is the house of God. His other insight came the night before he had to meet Esau again after his fourteen years of absence. He walked the banks of the stream that separated him from his brother, with that brother's threat of fourteen years before ringing in his ears. He was alone, wrestling with his worry and his fears, when he became conscious that Another wrestled with him and through the night he and this other struggled together with his problem. He won a victory over himself, faced the morning honestly and courageously, and came safely through. In that night's wrestling Jacob learned that when a man faces a vital problem he need not face it alone, for God will share his struggle. Almost we might call that strange encounter at Penuel the discovery of prayer. Out of it came a new name and a new man; Jacob became Israel. The spiritual experience worked out into clarity of moral vision and experience of moral power.

No account of the patriarchs is true to all the facts in the case which neglects to note that they launched an ethical, not a magical, religion into the world.

II

Moses and the Law

The intimate linking of the idea of the sacredness of human life with religious insight is still more clearly emphasized in the story of Moses and the development of the Jewish law.

The first fact with which the growing Moses had to grapple was human slavery. That wonderful mother of his undoubtedly burned the fact of his people's humiliation into his soul during those formative years when she tended him as his nurse in the household of Pharaoh. Throughout the years of his education there was ringing in his ears the clanking of the chains which bound his fellow Hebrews. He pondered upon a world in which the crack of the taskmaster's whip and the cries of slaves set the tone of his thinking. It was not strange that seeing an Egyptian striking a Hebrew he slew the Egyptian.

When he found himself a man of leisure in the fields and under the skies of Midian, after his flight from Egypt, he was still conscious of the cruel injustice he had left behind. The sun could not shine so fair upon the countryside as to make him forget the black cloud of human suffering he had known. In his heart were anger and resentment against the oppressors of his people. He was a man righteously inflamed against an evil system that prostituted human values and cheapened human life. Something, he knew, ought to be done about it. Something, he grew to feel, must be done about it. Finally came the insistent conviction that he himself must do something about it, and so we have the dramatic story of the burning bush, when, in the presence of flaming beauty, he fought his decision through and turned his face again toward Egypt, returning not as a fugitive but as a man commissioned of God to destroy an inhumane system and to set a captive nation free. Moses became acutely conscious of the comradeship of God in the hour when he forgot his own comfort to lose himself in a crusade for human liberty. The God of Moses was a God of emancipation.

In the subsequent story of the lawgiver there is no attempt to gloss over the weaknesses of people. It is a realistic and not a romantic picture which is painted of the nomadic tribes during their years of wandering. The ethical consciousness, with its clear vision of the high value of human life, does not insist upon false and idealized pictures of humanity but faces men as they are, in all their paradox of strength and weakness, insisting on their supreme value just the same. The Moses of Sinai, out of whose genius came the beginnings of the Law, was one whose eyes had been opened to human nature through many years of leading an ungrateful people through inhospitable territory. He was a realist, toughened by the hard knocks of experience, but one in whom the fires of ethical idealism never were banked. The original lawmaker was no fence-rider; he legislated out of a glowing heart.

The Hebrew Law itself is always solicitous of human well-being. It is not simply an arbitrary declaration of the will of God, as if he were a Celestial Autocrat, serving notice upon his minions; it is an ethical adventure, a plotting of the way by which men may best enrich each other's lives and so build a humane society. It is a blue print of the ideal house of humanity, as far as one of Moses' time could plan it.

The establishment of the Sabbath, for example, was the original recognition of the fact that there is a fatigue point in human labor, and that efficiency and happiness demand that it shall be acknowledged. It was specifically humane and social legislation. In its own way it was also an attempt to direct the proper use of leisure time, providing for cultural and religious activities on that day.

The commandment to honor father and mother was obviously an exaltation of the family with the consequent conservation of those values which are wrapped up in the primary group. Its social importance cannot easily be overestimated, for, along with the commandment to worship only the one God, it has kept the Jewish people alive as a people when a less clannish race would have been absorbed. Its promise has been generously fulfilled, for the days of the Hebrews as Hebrews have unquestionably been lengthened owing to their fine loyalty to home and tradition. It contains in it also provision for old age and for decrepitude. It was definitely a safeguarding of human values.

The essential prerogatives of individual personality were safeguarded in the commandments against murder and adultery. Alongside them must be put that infrequently quoted injunction against the bearing of false witness which sought to protect man's most individual possession, his name, the symbol of all his achievement and character. The gossip has a social value in so far as he helps to maintain social standards, but when he becomes a character assassin he is both unjust and unsocial. This commandment corrects him. By these three commandments protection of the most precious perquisites of personality is put into the very foundations of the Mosaic law.

Think of the moral implications of such a word as this which is taken out of the main body of the law, "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child." That sentence at once fixes the ethical stature of the man who wrote it and of the people who could accept it. Lay it over against our factories, our sweatshops, our sugar-beet fields, our foreign investments, and see what happens to them. There is no escaping the moral temper of this old law.

See how clearly this same body of law outlines righteousness in the conflict between property and personality. "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury." People first, property second is the order of consideration in this ancient code.

Once more, consider the implications of this command, "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The most noble rhetoric of the world has not been able to improve on that old word of Leviticus. It stands as the clearest statement of that spirit of good will by which alone men can live together successfully. No vengeance, no bearing of grudges, love to one's neighbor—there is the recipe for a successful society. It sums up that mutual respect which we are trying to say is the very essence of true ethics.

Still another example which will illustrate the way in which the law is dominated by a sense of the sacredness of human life is its forbidding of the cutting of the flesh in worship or the disfiguring of the body in mourning. Among people whose worship rose to a crescendo of ecstasy which caused them to slash their bodies with knives and whose modes of mourning made them harm their own flesh and blood, the Hebrew lawgiver felt a healthy loathing at such practices and insisted that Jehovah had altogether too much respect for men to demand any such revolting rituals from them. There is a fine dignity in the reason given for forbidding them, "for thou art an holy people." Contrast that phrase with the old barbaric speech and you realize you are moving on a different ethical plane.

While it is true that the Law is taken up a great deal with discussions of rituals and forms, yet in its essence it responds to a humane motive and is the expression of a religion at once institutional and ethical.

III

The Poets

Music is the rhythm of life made melody. It moves us at the profoundest depths of our being. So it is quite natural that the songs men sing should be the deepest insights we have into the real forces that play deeply in their lives and actually move them to action. That which men feel too profoundly for prosaic utterance they put into poetry and song. We are never nearer to the heart of any religion, therefore, than we are in its hymn book.

This fact at once gives peculiar value to the book of Psalms, the familiar song book of every Hebrew boy and girl. We find there the lyrical cry, not of some exclusive or highbrow group, but of the common worshiper. In it, if anywhere, we shall find the characteristic expressions of this faith.

What we do find is a mixture of emotions growing naturally out of the imperfect lives of the people who felt them. There are some intensely patriotic songs with bitter words of imprecation against enemies. There are petty and provincial prayers made to Jehovah as a tribal deity. There are songs of vengeance that flash with the threat of steel. Such expressions will not surprise us if we treat the book intelligently, for this is the book of the songs of a people who had been harassed by their foes, whose standards of civilization were still low, and whose religion was still evolving. The wonderful fact is that alongside these harsher expressions are some of the most melodious that men's tongues have ever sung, many of them so superb that all the years between have not been able to improve on them.

The ethical emphasis flashes through the psalms along five rays; insistence on the ethical character of God himself; the necessity of moral preparation for adequate worship; remembrance of the poor and those whom the world forgets; definite recognition of the relation of faith to ethics; and exaltation of brotherhood. We cannot here quote all the passages in these eternal poems which illustrate those moral insights that are at the very heart of the religion of the Old Testament, but we can look at enough of them to establish our point.

Again and again in their ascription of praise to Jehovah the psalmists sang of his holiness. However limited their vision of him might be, they never doubted that he was a righteous God. We continually hear them repeating such words as that which closes the eleventh psalm: "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright." In the heart of the nineteenth psalm. a hymn of praise to the Creator, is a majestic recognition of the righteousness of God in his dealings with men: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

Sometimes one stumbles on such lovely phrasing as that of the ninety-sixth psalm:

"Honor and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary."

They sang, these old poets, of a holy God whose very nature was righteousness and truth.[1]

It was natural that when they contemplated coming into the presence of the Holy One they should recognize that preparation of heart and mind was necessary, that only such as were clean could abide in his presence. The fifteenth psalm is devoted to emphasizing that the worshiper must come purified into the sanctuary or worship would be incomplete:

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[1] Compare also Psalms 9. 8; 12. 6; 33. 4–5; 51. 1; 98. 9; 99. 9; 100. 5; 104. 1.

> "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent."

Such a man would be considered a good man in any society, but it is refreshing to have so lofty an ethical standard held up as fitting preparation for entrance into the presence of the Most High. A familiar passage in the twenty-fourth psalm has the same ideal in it:

> "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."

The exhortation to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," which is written into the twenty-ninth psalm sums up in a single phrase the demand that those who worship God shall be holy even as he is holy. The form of worship never blinded these old poets to the necessity for an ethical character; the motions of the public service could never become a substitute in their eyes for moral achievement and integrity.[2]

Nothing is more characteristic of the ethical approach to life of which we are thinking than that it emphasizes the importance of the forgotten man. Once the supremacy of human values is definitely established as the central standard of activity, the humble man assumes a new importance. The fate of the insignificant is a major question with one who has decided that no policy is right which does not protect every human interest. It is therefore of the utmost importance in estimating the ethical nature of the Hebrew religion to remind ourselves of how insistent the psalms are on the value of the humblest of men in the sight of God. In the ninth psalm it is written:

> "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble."

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[2] Compare also Psalms 19. 14; 43. 3; 51. 17; 97. 11-12; 139. 23-24.

In this apparently impersonal world these religious songs insist on the value of personality. They exalt God as the champion of men. The one hundred and third psalm sings with tenderness:

> "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust."[3]

There is also the pragmatic demand in these old songs. By that I mean the expectation that faith shall prove itself in works. The first verse of the fourteenth psalm indicates how closely the poet linked infidelity in religion with moral infidelity:

> "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good."

The sixty-fourth psalm paints the other picture in its tenth verse, the picture of the man so sure of God that his whole life is righteous and radiant:

> "The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory."

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[3] Compare also Psalms 34. 6; 37. 1–10; 116. 6.

The whole of the one hundred and nineteenth psalm echoes with the prayer that faith may be strengthened and, as a result, uprightness be established in the life. It is the ballad of the religious pragmatist.

Also running through the whole book is the refrain of brotherhood, the recognition of the fundamental linking of lives, the exaltation of good will as the true cement of society. Perhaps no more beautiful lyric of fraternity has ever been penned than the one hundred and thirty-third psalm:

> "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

Thus we find in this unique book of religious songs five clear ethical notes struck by no uncertain hand but sounded forth confidently and again and again. The children learned these poems at their mothers' knees, the people sang them in their worship, they were bred into the bone of the Hebrew people. They remind us that the insights into the nature of God which these people attained were reached alongside of and parallel with profound moral insights; and that the two were so closely interwoven that the authors of these hymns thought them dependent upon each other. They insisted that only those who love and honor God are firmly rooted in righteousness, while at the same time they declared that only such as lived uprightly gave any proof of the knowledge of God. The noblest strains of this collection of inspiring songs are those which are truest to the ethical spirit and ideal. This is the hymn book of an ethical faith.

IV

The Prophets

Quite as characteristic of the Hebrew religion as its law or its songs were its prophets. No other faith has produced a succession of men just like these original and courageous spokesmen for Jehovah. It is, therefore, of the highest significance to note that their messages were ethical demands upon actual situations. The prophets did not generalize. They discussed concrete problems in specific terms. Contemporary social policies, projected international alliances, moot ecclesiastical practices, economic programs, the personal characters of rulers—these were the sort of themes to which they addressed themselves with all the seriousness, wit, imagination, and spiritual conviction that they possessed. They were the representatives of a religion which by its very nature they conceived to be related decisively to such human affairs.

Always they were dedicated to the ideal of the one true God. When his dominion over Israel or Judah was threatened they took it upon themselves as their first duty to exalt him, condemning all other deities and particularly all forms of polytheism. They were unfaltering monotheists. If you had asked the majority of them what their primary message was, they would have answered unhesitatingly that they were trying to keep alive the ideal of the one and only Jehovah. That is true. But we miss the whole point of the grip which their monotheism had upon them if we fail to see that theirs was an ethical monotheism. Inextricably interwoven with their ideal of God was their ethical ideal for men. They were as inflammable at that point as at the other, so that it would be difficult to decide whether their most burning words were spoken in defense of Jehovah or in denunciation of human wrongs unjustly inflicted.

Take, for example, the interview between

David and the prophet Nathan. It leaves nothing to be desired from the point of view of ethical directness. You cannot fail to have high admiration for a people who are willing to keep that story about their national hero in their sacred book; it indicates a patriotic realism that even crass provincialism cannot blind. But that is beside the point. What I am emphasizing here is that the prophet, while tactful in his approach, was fearless in his blunt denunciation of a human injustice right to the face of the guilty man. If any king ever deserved well of the religious leaders of his people, it certainly was David, yet so ingrained into the religious idealism of this prophet was the moral ideal that neither the rank of the king nor the genius of the poet could excuse immoral practice in his eyes. He knew but one God and but one moral law.

The same statement could be written of Elijah. This stanch old friend of Jehovah had one decisive battle to fight, and to it he brought his superb resources of physical strength and spiritual vision. That battle was dramatically portrayed in the most sensational story of the Old Testament—the duel between God and Baal on Mount Carmel. Elijah was prophet of Jehovah's exclusive claim. Yet even this titanic struggle did not prevent this fearless itinerant from confronting the king and his queen with the insistence that the same moral law governed them as the humblest commoner of their realm. Elijah had no writs of indulgence from Jehovah which could be bought with royal coin.

When you pass over to the prophets of the eighth century you realize that you are dealing with men who are face to face with the most difficult of all ethical situations—an age in which wealth accumulates and men decay. Both Israel and Judah were enjoying an extraordinary prosperity in this century. Material wealth brought its inevitable sequence where there was not enough moral vitality to control it—it cheapened human values and therefore dimmed the vision of God. The fundamental immorality of the century was the degradation of human values. Possessions came first and persons ran a poor second. Men looked upon their fellows as means to their own enrichment and thought that Jehovah could be bought with a bribe. The prophets, therefore, had two tasks—to exalt human values and to restore the dignity of God.

Amos was acutely conscious of the submerged groups. The dominant prosperity never dazzled his eyes enough to blind them to the destitution of those who were not sharing in the glittering spoils. He saw the under dog harried by worry, prostituted by his more powerful neighbors, descending to any practice to eke out a living, ground underfoot by the proud and smug wielders of the power of wealth, and he cried out against the injustice of the whole system, denouncing the tricky practices of those who added wealth to wealth without compunction of conscience or fear of God. Vividly, indeed, does he reveal the emptiness of ritual without righteousness in such words as these put into the mouth of Jehovah:

"I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

The gentle Hosea put his whole message into a story of a domestic tragedy cast into definitely ethical terms. What more felicitous picture of human bliss can there be than that of a home in which love and purity are joined? What more searching test of mercy than when one member of the partnership is false? Pride, anger, jealousy, suspicion, fear, all enter in to make a reconciliation almost impossible. Yet Hosea portrays a love so generous and strong that not once nor twice but three times it triumphs over all obstacles and freely forgives; a love that sees the human being so clearly that even disloyalty cannot blot the vision out. Such eyes, he declares, are like the eyes of God, and those who would serve God must learn mercy.

"For I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offering."

The very context of the call of Isaiah indicates how closely allied were his religion and his ethical vision. Conscious of the evil existing in the city about him, and oppressed by it, he entered the Temple to worship. As he came into the presence of God he cried in despair, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." His clear sense of the depravity around him made him think of God as the altogether righteous, the Holy One. His own call was sealed by the cleansing of the very lips of whose uncleanness he had complained. His eyes filled with the vision of holiness, his own experience cleansed at the point of its most vivid uncleanness, he went out to preach the one God whole in moral righteousness and glory.

Micah, himself the representative of the dispossessed peasantry, summed up the teachings of his three greater predecessors in a question and answer that reaffirms the ethical foundations of the religion of Jehovah:

"Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Fair treatment of one's fellows, the unstrained quality of mercy, and recognition of every man's obligation to accept the moral law—these are the three principles which emerge from this epochal revival of the religious spirit in eighth-century Israel. The religious reawakening was born out of the stress and storm of a moral struggle, and found its consummate expression in a searching ethical demand.

Even Jeremiah, premier prophet of personal religion as he was, never became so absorbed in mystical contemplation or in exalting the mystical way of life that he underestimated the importance of the issuance of that pure inner life into irreproachable conduct. From the sources of purity and love he looked for the river of truth and justice. In fact, though we call him conventionally the prophet of the inner life, it remains true that he addressed himself definitely to the discussion of the public questions of his day. The accession of Jehoiakim, for example, marks a definite crisis in his preaching, for, from that hour, even the few glimmerings of hope that shine through the earlier writings disappear, upon his becoming convinced that the people were too obdurate to obtain mercy. He was a man of his times, using the language of his times, facing the moral problems of his times, an ethical teacher whose moral principles lose none of their effectiveness because they come out of the background of a deeply spiritual interpretation of the inner experience of religion.

The second Isaiah founded his whole utterance upon a deep insight into the ethical structure of the universe itself. Himself caught with his fellow countrymen into slavery, he had to struggle with the whole question of the meaning of toil, grinding and merciless toil. Out of that struggle came to him the comforting conviction that toil was not a curse laid upon men for punishment but, rather, a means of self-expression and a partnership with God in completing his world. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is not the result of some beatific vision which came to an idler on a hillside some spring afternoon; it is the utterance of a man who has thought long and deeply during days of agonizing toil and nights of aching restlessness, to whom has come in his inmost soul the discovery that this is a worker's world which takes the suffering servant and makes him the saviour of life. It is the truth dug out of life by sweat and blood. This man found his knowledge of the supernatural in the rough camaraderie of the chain gang and in the broken hearts of slaves. You miss the point altogether of this prophet of suffering and release if you do not see the human value he discovered in the slave and painted so gloriously that men have seen in it ever since the portrait of the Son of God.

In the book of Jonah the Hebrew religion burst through its traditional provincialism and caught some understanding of what it would mean to extend the ethical considerations and religious revelations inherent in it to all mankind. The whole story is a dramatic picture of a nation feeling within itself the stirring of new life, restricting that life by its own narrowness, and at last winning through to an understanding that there were wider meanings to all that it had held dear than it had ever dreamed. It is the book of the discovery of the alien. It is the Hebrew looking through a new window and discovering that the Gentile is also a man like himself. It is the people of God beginning to understand that all people are his and precious in his sight. For ethical insight in the cosmopolitan sense, that is, for a statement of the value of men as men, nothing could be finer than the last word of this book put into the mouth of God:

> "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

Such a word is a fitting close for the discussion of the ethical emphases of the Old Testament revealed in its patriarchal stories, its law, its poetry, and its prophecy. So ingrained are these insights into its very warp and woof, that only those who read without thought can ever construe the religion it represents as supernatural, without particular ministry to or interest in human well-being. It is in its enthusiasms essentially an ethical religion worshiping an ethical God.

CHAPTER II

THE LIVING FLAME

THE ethical idealism of the religion of the Old Testament achieved its fulfillment in the character of Jesus. The spark which kindled in the men of the former days blazed to full splendor in him. This we of to-day can see the more clearly because the patient work of the scholars, who have devoted themselves during the past half century to scrutiny of the texts of the Old and New Testaments, has borne fruit in the rediscovery of the Jesus of history. In the hands of churchmen the Galilæan had become a dogma, a shibboleth, a conventional symbol, a magical charm, until he was so remote from the ordinary life of the ordinary man as to have little or no meaning for him. The revolutionary thing that has happened in our day has been that Jesus has walked out of these traditional limitations so that we are contemplating not some mysterious demi-god but an actual Jesus, whom we see in the manner in which he lived. The Christ of dogma is fading before the coming of the Jesus of history.

That is why some people have suddenly discovered that Christianity is dangerous. Fat men accustomed to command find themselves discomfited in the presence of this Man. Priests have their price but this Man is not even interested in price. The Christ of dogma was always a safe conservative; it is little short of a new revelation to discover that the Jesus of history was at least a liberal, and possibly a radical. The smug men who want things left undisturbed do not relish the advent of the Galilæan Idealist with the strange fire in his eyes. The Christ of dogma was always state owned; it gives new meaning to him to discover that the Jesus of history was a great free spirit crying down the wind. Complacent hundred-per-centers can find no comfort in him.

On the other hand, this new vision of Jesus has shown some men how fascinating is the whole religious quest and how romantic is the foundation of our faith. Accordingly, they have tried to capture this consummate Man for their own clubs, and to picture him in their own likenesses. The advertising man has attempted to make of him a glorified publicity expert, and has succeeded beyond his wildest dreams in presenting us with a man nobody ever did know as Jesus. In the hands of the radical the Galilæan has been transformed into an ideal walking delegate for a labor union, and the call of the Carpenter has been transmitted as the tocsin of revolution. The communists have added him to their membership, asserting that Comrade Jesus has his red card. Even the intelligentsia have entered the competition for possession of the "Man of Genius" whose words might read well in the cultured pages of the London Athæneum. Æsthete and craftsman, publicist and pietist, Rotarian and Red—they are all finding strange allurement in this emerging Jesus, and each of them is trying to stake a prior claim in him.

The point I want to make about both these reactions to Jesus, the uncomfortable one and the wistful one, is this: they both go back to the discovery that this Man put men first in the hierarchy of the considerations that must govern human conduct. He put a man's soul in one side of the balance and the universe in the other and said that the soul outweighed all else. Such a standard of values is a swift condemnation of those who never see men for machines, is an inviting trail for speculation to those who like to play with ideas, and is a rallying call for all such as desire to see a juster society than we now have. You can do everything with Jesus except ignore him. You simply cannot lay claim to intellectual integrity if you fail to come to terms with the one man who has stood up in the course of history to say that human life is primarily an adventure in mutual enrichment, that the way to a completer knowledge of God is through larger appreciation of men, that human conduct is always right when it is kind, that no effort is as important as that which brings the more abundant life to men. "This is my commandment," said he, "that ye love one another, as I have loved you." The insistence of his love upon the primacy of human values is the theme of this chapter. He is the one Man of the world's life who has thought, acted, and lived by the unalloyed desire to help men to achieve the best life has in store for them.

I

HIS DEEDS

His actions gave immediate expression to that desire. Take, for example, the miracles he performed. This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the scientific explanation of them. Suffice it on that score to say that any man is at least impertinent who dares to set a limit to the forces which may be set in motion by a personality as uniquely at home in the universe as that of the Master. Our definition of miracle is always definitely phrased in terms of the limitations of our own knowledge, so that the miracle of one generation is the commonplace experience of the next. Sir Walter Raleigh would be thrown into consternation by an aeroplane, and Sir Isaac Newton would declare electric lighting to be the work of either devils or of gods. We simply have to say that we have no way yet of measuring the resources which the universe puts at the command of a man like the Master, although we may get hints of them in some superb personalities whom we meet. That, however, is not what I am interested in just now. What I want us to see is that the miracles as reports of his conduct throw a definite light on the kind of man Jesus was.

In the first place they show that he was the kind of man about whom such stories could be told at all. Why is there no record of Caiaphas turning water into wine? Was he not high priest? How does it happen that there is no word of Nicodemus restoring sight to blind eyes? Was he not a member of the Sanhedrin? Where is the testimony of Gamaliel feeding five thousand? Was he not the greatest of the rabbis? And Pilate, representative of Rome itself, why has no man written of his raising the dead? Obviously, the answer to such questions is that, admirable as these men may have been and powerful as they were, they were not the kind of men of whom such things could be believed. Jesus, on the other hand, acted in such a way that his closest comrades were just the ones who believed most devotedly in his willingness and his power to perform such acts. His behavior was such that those who knew him best had no difficulty in thinking of him as continually bringing to the sick and the handicapped health and a new chance.

The miracles themselves were never arbitrary events injected for their own sakes into the ministry of Jesus. The interpretation which makes them publicity stunts for the exaltation of himself or his power is so contemptibly vulgar that no man who has caught the spirit of Jesus at all will ever be guilty of it. The miracles were definite responses to definite human needs. They were Jesus engaged in the business of substituting perfection for imperfection in the experiences of the people whom he met. Every personality that touched his with any sort of understanding was stronger because of that contact, better equipped for the living of life. His miracles vividly dramatize his whole attitude toward human experience. He could not be indifferent in the presence of human need, always he gave all he had to correct it.

He even healed on the Sabbath day. At

first glance that may not seem a very significant thing to say, but if we look more deeply into it, we see that it means that when he had to choose between institutional values and human values he had no hesitation in preferring the latter. The Sabbath was the most typical of Hebrew institutions, for it came right down from Sinai; it had an unbroken historical sequence even through the days of the exile, when every other traditional practice was perforce temporarily abandoned, and it was universally practiced by all Jews wherever they were scattered over the earth. No one act could more definitely startle Judaism than to challenge the Sabbath, for such a challenge would strike at three foundation stones of Jewish orthodoxy—the authority of the Law, the power of tradition, and the validity of current religious practice. Yet in the healing of the man by the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath day and the curing of the withered hand right in the synagogue Jesus did nothing less than to assert the priority of human helpfulness over institutional loyalty.

The decadent religionism of his time rejected such an assertion and the crucial conflict of Jesus' life was fought out at the point of his placing institutionalism in second place to humanitarianism. His simple love of men made Jesus an iconoclast, a rebel, and a heretic in the eyes of the guardians of the accepted order. The institutionalists could not understand the spontaneity of his pure desire to help men. He was a puzzle and a perplexity to the stolid and respectable citizens who were his contemporaries. He was so careless of so many things they prized highly that they were afraid that he was flippant regarding religion itself. The Pharisees, living by law without love, found themselves confronted by a man who lived by the law of love. Bewildered by him, resenting his harsh condemnation of their complacent ways, fearing his effect on the people, they crucified him for his irreligion. Jesus was religion as living passion; they were religion as memory repeating the echoes of more creative days. Naturally, one or the other had to go, and Jesus, being in the minority, went.

This emphasis does not mean that Jesus rejected institutions. On the other hand, he supported them, for he was always in his place in the synagogue on the Sabbath Day. But it does mean that he kept clearly in mind the fact that institutions exist for men and not men for institutions. Institutions can never finally derive their justification from history or tradition; the test of the vitality of any institution or creed or practice is its. ability to serve the men of its time. No matter how glorious its history, the institution becomes intolerable when it is an obstacle to human service.

The whole activity of Jesus emphasizes the point that he put the helping of men who needed help ahead of every other employment, and the consideration of human values above every other consideration. His behavior justifies the conclusion that we are always right when we are kind. With whatever forces human interest came into conflict, he was always on the human side. His activity was devoted to his one ambition, that through him men might have life and have it abundantly.

II

HIS ESTIMATE OF HUMAN NATURE

This insistence of Jesus on the supremacy of human values found expression also in his high estimate of human nature. Ordinarily, we proceed on the assumption that human nature is sordid and untrustworthy. We suspect humanity. When someone does that which is unworthy we say, "That is human nature," so that the very term itself stands for weakness. We have no faith in human stuff, and on the foundation of this lack of faith we have proceeded to build our internationalism, our economics, our industrialism, and our society. Because we have believed human nature to be unresponsive to higher appeals we have insisted that selfishness must rule in the affairs of men.

Jesus immediately and uncompromisingly confronted this popular attitude of suspicion with that of faith. Jesus believed in man. He definitely parted with the world on the two issues of God and man. With regard to God the difference between the ordinary man and Jesus is not so much one of interpretation as of intensity; that is to say, the ordinary man accepts the idea of God but is neither hot nor cold about it, whereas to Jesus, God was the most vivid and compelling fact of experience. With regard to man, the difference between Jesus and the rest of us is that between faith and cynicism. Jesus believed in men and we do not. Both these differences are sensational enough, but that which touches our human contacts seems the more sensational because it not only operates within us but also affects the tangible and obvious relationships of life. Over against the current estimate of man that makes him a little higher than a gorilla Jesus puts the prophetic estimate that he is a little lower than God, not as a dogma or a theory but as a working principle of life. He did not argue about men being made in the image of God; he treated them as if they were.

He staked all he had on the belief that men were equal to responding to such treatment worthily. Having loved his fellows, he loved them unto the end. He died for that love, believing that there was enough of the divine in men so that in the end they would not forget so great a Lover. He was either profoundly right or he was tragically wrong. If he was not the wisest of men, he was the biggest of fools, for he bet his life on the ultimate goodness of man.

This does not mean that he was blind to human weakness or that he viewed men through an aura of golden fantasy. The frequently quoted text, "He knew what was in man," (John 2. 25) comes out of the record of an incident that indicates his clear understanding of human fickleness. It emphasizes the fact that he was not willing to trust himself to the first starry-eyed group of enthusiasts that his words lifted out of themselves. He knew too much about men to launch his enterprise on the uncalculating self-abandonment of new converts.

Moreover, his castigation of men's wickedness was couched in words as hot as any that have ever fallen from a prophet's lips. The deep insight which he had into human weakness is revealed in the searching terms in which he discussed men's sinfulness. He did not bother much to drive at this or that particular manifestation of inner weakness or corruption; he discussed sin in terms of the inner attitudes out of which evil conduct springs.

It is always a little dangerous to make lists of emphases in any man's teaching, for probably no two analysts of a body of ideas would sort them out in just the same way, and it is unlikely that any of them would do it precisely as the author himself would. Nevertheless, I think that we may say that there are four types of sin on which Jesus seems to put a constantly recurring emphasis, as if he considered them to be the most subtle enemies of the finest kind of living. The first was lack of compassion—inability or unwillingness to respond to specific human need. In the only picture which he has given us of the Last Judgment this irresponsiveness was the ground of condemnation, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." The second major sin we may characterize as the impure imagination, the kind of ugly thinking to which he referred in his discussion of the true meaning of adultery and of murder. The third is a little more difficult to name. Sometimes we call it hypocrisy, but it is more subtle than just the attempt to deceive others—it is living with a lie so long that you come to believe it yourself. It is a fundamental lack of integrity, a life founded upon make-believe. This it was which he condemned so harshly in the sham of the Pharisees' artificial world. The fourth weakness which he decried was indecision—such a fundamental lack of faith as makes accomplishment impossible. This he brought home in his parable of the man who put his hand to the plow but looked back, thus proving himself lacking in the purpose and courage necessary to achieve the kingdom of God.

All this he saw in men but the point is that he did not allow these evils in men to blind him to the good in them. He saw man's selfishness, but behind it he saw also his generosity, as he demonstrated in the parables of the prodigal son and of the good Samaritan. He saw man's incredulity, but he never lost sight of his faith, as the stories of the miracles prove. He pierced through the veil of the impure passions of people to see the pure love of which they were capable, as we may read in the stories of the woman of Samaria, Mary Magdalene, and the woman taken in sin. Back of human weakness he was conscious of human power, so that to his disciples, as provincial and unpromising a group of men as you might hope to meet, he dared to give the great commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." He had a right to know, if ever a man did, the irresponsiveness of people to spiritual challenge, yet he was so sure of man's ability to respond to noble spiritual achievement that he said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." That sentence is an expression of confidence in his own power, it is also the greatest compliment ever paid to humanity.

Always he dealt with men on the basis of their strength and not of their weaknesses. The rest of us have an unfortunate way of interpreting the finer manifestations of life in terms of the coarser, of trying to find evil motives for generous conduct. Jesus always sought the nobler side of those who were apparently ignoble, and appealed to that. Within the ordinary fishermen of Galilee he saw the extraordinary fishers of men who should change a world's history. Deep in the heart of the mutable Simon He saw the rock on which He should found His church. The narrow-minded bigotry of the Pharisee Saul he transformed into the single-mindedness of the apostle Paul. He saw the possibilities in every man he met and dealt with him on that basis, He proved the rightness of his belief in men by his own experience. It is fair to say that he could never have achieved the character to which he attained if he had not believed in the human nature which he shared with us. Certainly, his faith in men proved itself in his ability to help others. His attitude of heart and mind made possible the substitution of perfection for imperfection in every handicapped life he touched, and so carried its own vindication in that very fact.

Jesus built his conduct on enthusiasm for humanity. He looked on human nature and found it good so that he asked nothing of life but a chance to help men to know themselves better and to discover the hidden resources of their lives. He gave all he had to the best he could find in men.

III

His Parables

The parables of Jesus also throw a bright light on his thought of men. In the first place, they reveal his keen dramatic appreciation of human situations. His were eyes that observed men so accurately that no detail of their lives escaped him. People were absorbingly interesting to him, they filled his world with their activities.

He saw them with that discernment which can come alone to those who delight in men and women. The world he knew was no drab place filled with colorless nonentities, but, rather, a stimulating place in which he met personalities who fascinated him.

"The poem hangs on the berry bush
  When comes the poet's eye;
The streets begin to masquerade
  When Shakespeare passes by."

Jesus had the poet's eye. Who can ever forget his pictures of the birds or of the growing seed or of the red sky? He it was who looked upon the fields of Palestine red with lilies swaying in the wind and saw passing before his eyes all the pomp and pageantry of Solomon's court; then the courtly glory faded out, leaving him alone with the loveliness of the lilies; and they seemed more beautifully clad in his eyes than the gorgeous courtiers of Israel's most sumptuous king. He was fit to be called the Son of David if only for his appreciation of the beauty of God's world. Brother is he of every man of genius who

"Finds tongues in trees, books in the running
    brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

All the haunts of human beings were for him captivating pictures. Little details of his teaching reveal how rich was his appreciation of even the common details of our human life. The candle set on the stand to light the faces in the room, the mother trying to put a new patch on an old garment, the rich man sitting back to take his ease, the sower casting forth his seed, the man sitting down to count the cost of the new house of which he dreams, the merchant excited over finding the goodly pearl —all these and many more miniatures like them show how exquisitely interested he was in everything men did. Cold cynicism could not touch him, he was spontaneously and irresistibly fascinated by his fellows. Their lives to him were a constant joy. His stories reveal how profoundly he understood them, how clearly he saw them. Because he delighted in them he dramatized them.

Not only the art but also the intent of the parables reveals where his dominating interests lay. Again and again he emphasizes in them that the quest for God can be realized only through active human kindness. The realization of the kingdom of God and the fulfillment of human life were identical in his thinking. As an inner experience the Kingdom is as thrilling as the discovery of the pearl of great price by the merchant; as a social adventure it is as hospitable as the mustard tree in whose branches the birds build their nests; as an eternal hope it is the house of the Father's love and comfort. His whole ideal is bound up in the anticipation of a world where all the influences of environment will conspire to help every man to realize the noblest life of which he is capable.

The men whom he holds up to scorn in his parables are those who are careless of their fellows. The rich man who was so absorbed in his own selfishness that he could not notice the beggar at his door; the pious man who was so fascinated by his own righteousness that, even in God's presence, he forgot his kinship with his fellow men, and dared to thank him that he was not as other men; the judge who would not listen to a widow's wrongs; the craven who dared not live up to the talent that he had—these are the kind of people to whom even Jesus could not lend dignity when they appeared in his stories.

In the parable of the good Samaritan Jesus pierced through all the pretenses that hedge about respectability and plunged into a fundamental definition of the life that is good. Perhaps there is a sly dig at the men who persist in trying to play the game of life alone in the picture of the man who started out on the perilous road from Jerusalem to Jericho without escort of any kind. At any rate he ran into thieves whom he could not combat and was left bleeding by the roadside. Then came by the representative of orthodox religion, the priest of the accepted order. So absorbed was he in himself and his own programs that he paid no attention whatever to the suffering man. To the primitive cry of human need his ears were deaf. Yet, mark you, he was religious and knew his ritual perfectly; no man might ever hope to find him at the altar with his priestly robes awry. After him came the aristocrat, the respectable man *par excellence*, a member, I would have you know, of the tribe of Levi. Not quite so deafened by the voices of things as they were, he heard the cry of pain and crossed the road to look into the sufferer's face. Then he passed on. After all, what business was it of his if fools insisted on being robbed? He would watch his own step and every other man must do the same. How surprised that Levite would have been if someone had suddenly thrust into his hands a mirror and he had seen upon his forehead the mark of Cain! He passed on undisturbed, not even considering the incident worth repeating at the dinner table that evening.

Then came along the outcast man, the heretic, the foreigner, the Bolshevik. He wore no priestly robes, he had no recognition or identification pins, no signs or passwords; he was a Samaritan dog. One possession still remained to him, however. It was a heart—a living heart that could hear the call of human suffering and could respond. He lifted the stricken man and cared for him.

Two points the Master made in this skillful story. The first was this, that the fundamental wickedness of life is irresponsiveness to human need, and wickedness it is, no matter what our trappings or our titles are. The supreme test of religion's vitality is its readiness to relieve human wrongs. The other was that men are bigger than the tags we pin on them, for even Samaritans may be gentlemen. You have learned something about Jesus when you have thought through the fact that he made the hero of his parable of human gentleness a man who was an outcast, a despised outsider, to the people he was addressing. Provincialism wilts in the presence of our Christ.

The whole story of the prodigal son, coming as the climax of the fifteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel and following after the stories of the lost coin and the lost sheep, centers in the thought of the supreme value of the individual man in spite of what his past has been. The Good Samaritan reveals the man in the stranger, the Prodigal Son the man in the fool. The other two members of his family are measured by their ability to see the value of the man in him. The father, perhaps the most glorious of all the characters in the parables of the Master, recognized the wonder of the repentant hour of his son's life which marked his discovery of himself and therefore of his entrance into life. The elder son, the most repellent of all the characters whom Jesus drew, was so dwarfed by his own affairs, so jealous of praise given elsewhere, so swift to self-pity, that he was incapable of wonder at the miracle of his brother's new life. With the father no consideration blinded him to what he saw in his boy's eyes; he gave him welcome unrestrained. With the elder brother a lot of selfish considerations came in to sour his welcome; so absorbed was he in himself that he missed the point of what was happening under his nose. He was blind in Jesus' eyes because he was not humane. Thus does this greatest of parables sum up the message of all of them—that human kindness is the way of insight into truth and life.

IV

His Prayers

When we turn from the parables to the prayers of Jesus we are faced by the fact that we are not allowed many glimpses into the prayer life of the Master. He did not parade his piety but lived up to his own maxim that when we pray we should enter into the closet and close the door. Again and again we see the fires of resentment kindling in him against those who used prayer for advertising purposes, standing where men could not fail to see them, lifting up their hands when they prayed. He was never guilty of that. When he talked with the Father he got away from the reporters, with the result that our records of his prayers are scanty.

Nevertheless, he did pray, and we do have some suggestions as to the manner of his prayers. It is striking, for example, that every prayer of his, that we have, is related definitely to some human need. The evidence given us justifies our saying that his prayers were never vague aspirations or hazy dreams but were the seeking for aid and guidance in actual and specific situations. He apparently did not pray for the sake of praying but in order that he might solve particular problems. Whenever he came into the presence of the Father he knew just what he was seeking.

In the records of some of the miracles it is said that he lifted up his eyes to heaven and prayed that God would glorify himself in his Son. Coming to God for definite help in the presence of human need, he evidently believed that God glorified himself most when he helped men most. The prayers seeking help for the working of miracles certainly uphold the contention that the religion of Jesus was so closely bound up with human kindness as to be inseparable from it.

The Lord's Prayer, while we have no evidence that it was ever used by the Master in his own private devotions, is nevertheless the only model prayer which he has given us, and is in itself so perfect a gem of speech that, in spite of the fact that it comes out of a context that warns against vain repetitions, we have inevitably adopted it for ritualistic use. One good thing to notice about it is its brevity. Evidently, Jesus did not measure the effectiveness of a prayer by the multiplicity of its words.

The first point I want to make here, however, is this, that in the very heart of it is the petition, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." No reasonable interpretation can make that anything but a social petition. If it be offered with understanding, it is nothing less than the consecration of one's life to the building of such a society as shall perfectly express the desire of the Father for the most abundant life for all his children.

Later in the prayer is a petition which makes it even clearer that, in the mind of Jesus, man's right relationship with God is conditional upon his fair treatment of his fellows, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." That little word "as" makes the whole concept of forgiveness ethical. It says that we can expect no more gentle treatment from the Father than we are willing to give to our brothers and sisters. Who are our brothers and sisters? Every man and woman who can pray, "Our Father." When you can find a person to whom you can deny the right to call God Father, then, and only then, you have found one to whom you have the right to deny Christian treatment. Forgiveness of our sins is not some magical washing out of the past once and for all, but is a continual process, and our assurance that our sins are forgiven comes to us in the knowledge that we ourselves forgive those who wrong us. Christian assurance cannot be defined merely in terms of an inner peace which may be no more than self-deception or self-flattery, but must find its validity in such victories in our own moral struggles as give proof of moral power. All the way through the Lord's Prayer there is recognition of the fact that the issues of life are bound up in its moral struggle, so that its petitions close with the cry, "Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

Nor can we leave this prayer without considering the implications of the request, "Give us this day our daily bread." Sometimes when I have recited this prayer beside a grave I have been struck by the fact that this petition for bread was a little incongruous there. And so it is. But that only serves to remind us of the fact that the mind of the Master was not so absorbed in affairs of the other world that he forgot the needs of this one. He definitely recognized that any kind of abundant life this side of the grave depends first upon the elementary hungers of the body being satisfied. Every time we pray this petition, if we know what we do, we put ourselves under obligation to refuse the cake of life until every breathing man has had bread to satisfy his hunger. Short indeed is this model prayer, seventy words in all, but its reach is so long that it goes out from us to the life of every human being in all God's round world.

The prayer which is reported in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel gives us our clearest echo of an actual prayer of Jesus. It is throughout a prayer of intercession, the utterance of a man who is thinking not in terms of abstract principles but in terms of living human beings, of a man who is praying not for the triumph of ideas as such, but for men. "For their sakes I sanctify myself," is the key to which the whole prayer is pitched.

He prayed, this Master of ours, not that certain ideals should triumph for their own sakes, but that men should have a better, fairer chance at all that is best in life. You may call him a pragmatist, if you like, and think that you are condemning him; but he will take your term of derision and wear it like a diadem as he goes in and out among men, stirring them to new ambitions, arousing them to nobler struggles, awakening in them hidden fires. He was, of course, a Man with an Idea, but it was an idea that worked for the enrichment of human living and that was the fact which enlisted him. Call him, if you like, a pragmatic idealist. Any name will do if it takes account of the fact that he was interested in no theories which did not serve men and in no opinions which did not lead human beings to a brighter life. This prayer, at the Last Supper, he made as our great High Priest, standing with the shadow of the cross on which he was to sacrifice himself already across his path, and it is a prayer that men may come to know that truth which shall set them free from selfishness and teach them love: "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them" is the desire with which he brings it to its close.

One other prayer we must not forget. It is the one which comes out of the bitter loneliness of Gethsemane. Faced with the relentless agony of a crucifixion, he had to fight the battle of his final decision alone. Should he compromise and avoid the cross or should he carry on to the end? It is little wonder that all that was human in him should shrink from what he saw before him so that he cried, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me"—a cup that was all full of shame and pain. But the hero in him gained the victory—"Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." The world would to-day be infinitely poorer had it not been for that decision, and he knew it. He gave himself to enrich the world. The richest heritage ever bequeathed to our breathing world is this Man of Galilee, who, having loved his own which were in the world loved them unto the end.

His last prayer, spoken as they were driving the nails in his hands, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," is the perfect expression of what we have been finding in all his prayers. It was a prayer for men who right then needed praying for, and in it he forgot himself. The prayers of Jesus lend little countenance to the ascetic caricatures which have passed currency as portraits of him. They came out of the struggle with human need. We can never hope to pray like him till we have felt a passion for men like his.

V

His Conversations

Not only in his communion with God but also in his conversations with men did Jesus give evidence of the supremacy of the moral consideration in his thinking. Though he handled each individual in the way best suited to his or her need, yet in the end he always brought his listener face to face with some humane challenge. Indeed, we may say that the very fact that he treated each individual as an individual is in itself evidence of the value which he set upon men as men.

Every new encounter was to him a new adventure in human understanding. He never outraged the fundamental prerogative of personality by treating anybody as if he had forgotten the innate dignity of each life in itself. He never lost actual men in some vague concept of universal man. No classifications blotted out for him the individual lines of the faces he saw. When a man came to him he met him on his own terms and spoke to him in his own language. Any student of human behavior will learn a lot of practical psychology if he goes through the Gospels just to see how Jesus handled the different types of people who came to him to talk things over. Beneath every conversation there is the fine courtesy that recognizes the right of the other individual to live his own life and to have his own point of view.

This is true even in the case of Nicodemus, whom Jesus had to shock if he were going to reach him at all. This Pharisee was the very incarnation of religion as dogma. He had been trained in a religion which had substituted the ceremonies of the Temple for the lightnings of Sinai, and careful interpretation of cold words for fine, careless rapture. It defined the devout man as the meticulous man. To the prophet Isaiah consecration had meant a live coal on the tongue, but to the Pharisee it meant a careful calculating of tenths. It was not Nicodemus' fault that he thought being religious meant no more than being orthodox. He kept all the commandments, he read the Scriptures, he attended the synagogue, and he tithed. You could have examined him under a microscope and you would have found neither an unsafe detail nor an enthusiastic one. He was correct in every way according to the only religion he had ever known.

When he stood before Jesus this formal righteousness of his was confronted by fresh and vivid conviction. His own experience seemed curiously empty in the presence of this man with an original experience of God, whose spirit was a flame and a tenderness, a hurting and a healing in strange and beautiful union. As Jesus and Nicodemus faced each other in the twilight they dramatized the two contrasts of religious history—the warm heart and the religious institution, spontaneity and formalism. Jesus simply had to startle Nicodemus out of his complacency if he were to be prepared in any degree to understand him, and so he did not beat about the bush at all but flung out at him the sensational word, "Ye must be born again." It was Jesus' way of emphasizing to Nicodemus that he must throw away all his faith in forms and ceremonies, and begin again by establishing living contact with the living God. The heart aflame with divine love, said he, is the only passport into the kingdom of heaven. Nicodemus went away puzzled at this Man whose thoughts of God and men pulsed with such eager life. He never followed him, nor did he wholly reject him, for even at the end he spoke a brave word for him in the Sanhedrin.

The conversation with the woman at the well moved on quite a different level. Instead of the contrast between spontaneous and petrified religion there was here the contrast between control and passion. Over against the turbulent, uncontrolled spirit of the woman stood the calm and poise of Jesus. Never was there a conversation between two principals more unlike than the pure, strong artisan of Galilee and the artificial, strained woman of Sychar. Yet, curiously enough, one detects a hopefulness in this story that the other story lacks, as if there were more hope for one who knows herself to be a failure than for a religionist stunted by his own conventions.

In his handling of this conversation Jesus proceeded more gradually than he had with Nicodemus. He first aroused her curiosity by suggesting that he had water the drinking of which would quench thirst so that it never would return. Then, as the conversation gave evidence of being prolonged, he said with perfect naturalness—for the Orient was even more particular about such proprieties than are we Puritans—"Go call thy husband." When she replied with something of a smirk that she had no husband, he pierced through all her silly vanities with a sentence pointed like a dagger, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband." In a flash she saw her futility. Like David of old, she knew she stood in the presence of a prophet.

Pulling herself together, however, she made a desperate effort to switch the conversation by introducing a theological dispute about the true place to worship Jehovah. Jesus refused to be sidetracked. He sharpened the thorn of conviction and pressed it home to her heart. His interest was not in whether she was a Samaritan or not but in whether she was finding life's real satisfactions or only feasting on the east wind. Ecclesiastical arguments could not command him: what he wanted to know was whether she was worshiping God in spirit and in truth.

That word, "truth," needs to be carefully defined in our minds. We ordinarily think of it as meaning an intellectual position, an attainment of the mind. It does not seem to me that Jesus uses it with just that shade of meaning. To him truth was defined in terms of character; it was an attainment of the whole personality. He said, "I am . . . the truth." If we may ascribe such a definition to him, then his requirement of worship becomes that it shall minister richly to the inner life and come to flower in holy character. We must worship God not only in the private places of our lives into which no man may intrude, but also in every phase of our behavior. We worship truly by being true.

This same story includes a conversation of Jesus with his disciples. They came back to him from buying food to eat and set their purchases before him asking him to refresh himself. He said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Immediately their questions began, a fact which showed Jesus to be a wise teacher, for the inquiring mind is open and apt. He was wiser here than Socrates, for while the great Athenian taught by asking questions, he taught by making his disciples ask them. When they were ready he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." That statement immediately raised the question, what is God's will and how may I know it when I need to know it? Answering it before it was asked, Jesus said, "There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." In other words his definition of opportunity was the presence of people. We need seek no further for God's will for us than the nearest human life to which we can make any contribution whatever. God's will is that we shall help men.

An entirely different kind of conversation was that which Jesus had with the rich young ruler. Here was the young man who was more like the Master himself than any other who crossed his path. He was young, eager, finely controlled, and capable of responding with enthusiasm to the call for high spiritual adventure. Fired by the words of the Galilæan, catching the contagion of his vision, he came with shining eyes into his presence to ask him the way of eternal life. Jesus met him at the level of his own experience by reminding him of the commandments. Quickly the young ruler made his reply that all these he had kept from his youth up. There was not an unorthodox belief or unconventional practice in his life. How many of us would give all we have if only we could look into the eyes of Jesus and say that we have kept all the commandments from our childhood up!

Anyone else would have been satisfied with that, but Jesus has an exasperating way of expecting more of us than others do. He probed with his own sharp needle more deeply into the mind of the young man. He asked the one inescapable question—was there anything in this man's experience which he loved more than human well being? He put him to the test. He did not ask him whether he accepted certain articles of religion, He said, in substance, "Do you love your fellows so much that you cannot bear to be rich while they are poor?" Then the young man turned his back on men and his face toward his possessions. He could not stay in the company of Jesus, for everyone who walks with him must put human values first.

This same humane interest is revealed in the conversation which Jesus had with those who brought to him the woman taken in adultery. He did not argue about the law or discountenance it in any way; he simply raised the question of fitness. Granted that she ought to be stoned as the Law says, who should stone her? Swift as lightning he laid bare to every man his own inmost soul saying, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Mercilessly he stripped from them the rags of their superior assumptions and showed them their naked kinship with every sinner on earth. When they had gone, then he, who was fit to cast a stone, stooped to lift the woman to her feet, as he said with characteristic combining of generosity and challenge, "Go, and sin no more." A gentle man indeed was this Christ of ours. He never broke a bruised reed but bound up every broken heart he touched.

In every one who came to him he looked for human kindness, responsiveness to human need, ethical treatment of their fellows. No reputation was so assured that he would excuse its owner from the primary obligation to be kind; no position was so high that he exonerated him that filled it from the duty to respond to the cries of genuine distress; no wealth was so great that he absolved its owner from treating his fellow men fairly. His conversations demonstrate that Jesus measured men not by their rank or station but by their treatment of the men who shared God's world with them.

VI

HIS SERMONS

When we turn from the informalities of his sermon-stories and conversations to the formal utterances of Jesus we find in them too the conscious exaltation of human values. It is impossible to read the didactic addresses which he made without realizing how solicitous for human well being he was. Always he exalted those virtues which make for more successful living together.

The Sermon on the Mount was his statement of the fundamentals of his way of life for the disciples who were seeking to walk in it. Here, if anywhere, we ought to be able to put our fingers on the essence of his message. It was his own personal definition of the religious life. It could not be by accident, therefore, that he had little to say about doctrinal contentions and much to say about human behavior in actual situations. The whole address is full of ethical plain speaking. Those who insist that the followers of Jesus should not meddle in practical affairs would do well to read this sermon again.

Of the nine beatitudes, two encourage those who suffer in his name persecution for opposing the accepted order of things, one is a definite word of comfort to those in whose eyes there is the glistening of tears, one is in praise of that inner purity which enables its possessor to see God in all his creation, one exalts the eagerness of those who cannot be content without righteousness, and four praise virtues which definitely pacify human relations by exalting human values. "The poor in spirit" are those out of whom sensitive egotism has gone, so that envy, jealousy, and hate, have no place in their experiences; there are no false barriers between them and their fellows. "The meek" are those who do not think of themselves more highly then they ought to think, so that, as a result, they are able to work harmoniously with other men. "The merciful" are those who have learned to forgive their enemies and all who use them despitefully. "The peacemakers" are those who allay the passions, still the voices, and stay the hands of strife. In his own list of the "blessed," Jesus does not mention the doctrinally orthodox, but sets up an ethical orthodoxy to which he expects men to conform their conduct. His most pretentious utterance is in praise of the good way of living.

When he turned to discuss the place of his disciples in the world of men he said that they should be as a light to those who sit in darkness. But that light in his mind was no mystic gleam that should come out of the vasty deep somewhere. It was nothing more or less than conduct so ethically fine that men could not ignore it. There are no flights into the empyrean in Jesus' description of how we should glorify God, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." He would have our conduct so winsome as to woo men to God.

Lest we should be in any doubt as to just what he meant by "good works," He went right on to define them, calling for a righteousness defined in far more profound terms than the legalistic impeccability of the Pharisees. He superseded the law against murder, for example, with a warning against anger of any kind. Nor did he repeat pretty generalities about anger itself, but came down to cases, talking about people who call their fellows fools, asserting that no man could come to an altar fit to pray who carried with him a grudge against any man anywhere, saying that we should agree with an adversary at once and so get rid of the many complications of unsettled disputes.

In a similar way, and without gloves on, he handled the questions of adultery and the swearing of oaths. Then he summed up the whole of this section of his sermon with those words that we have never had the courage to take seriously, which yet are the only words ever spoken that define for us the way of life in which men can live at peace within themselves and with others. "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also . . . Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."

There flashes out the question which no follower of his can escape, "What do ye more than others?" The very currency of this Man's kingdom is minted from good deeds. Jesus made it as clear as words could that his religion was an ethical demand.

The next section of the sermon is a warning against wearing one's piety as personal display. It reveals that fine sense of delicacy in Jesus—which some of his modern biographers seem to overlook—that revolted against parading in public what belongs to the choicest moments of the inner life, or making a show of those kindnesses which are gracious only as they are anonymous. It is a direct appeal for honesty in every department of the religious life, in the giving of alms, in prayer, and in fasting. Religion to him was not a cloak for other men to admire but an inner experience to be lived out.

He followed up this plea for genuineness with one for faith, asserting that he who serves God with an undivided allegiance will be cared for by him. He thought always of the guiding Spirit behind the universe as being a Spirit of good will, and so he believed that men who lived the life of good will would find themselves supported by all the resources of the world in which they found themselves. Accordingly, he made his plea for a completely unselfish investment of men in human service.

Four clear-cut moral demands bring the whole discourse to its conclusion. He insists that the man who sets himself up as a judge over his fellows shall first examine himself, lest he be less than generous with one whose fault is not as great as his own. Then, passing to the question of God's treatment of us, he says that that treatment will match in generosity our treatment of our fellows; and it is at this point that he utters the Golden Rule, which we usually quote without its introductory word "therefore"—"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Passing from that thought to the consideration of other teachers who may seek to disprove his word, Jesus says that the validity of any man's teaching must be tested by his life, for it is by their fruits only that we may know them. Then he applies this same standard to those who should follow him, saying that many who profess his name, "saying, Lord, Lord," would be unacceptable to him because they were "workers of iniquity." The very vocabulary of this Man's kingdom is fashioned out of the eloquence of well-wrought deeds.

The sermon from beginning to end is an

ethical plea. It never loses itself in vague disquisitions on theoretical questions, but holds steadily to the consideration of human conduct in actual affairs. It is the plain speech of a man interested in nothing else but the development in others of the life of good will.

The address reported in the fourth Gospel's story of the Last Supper moves along a different line, as the occasion itself was different, but nowhere in it is there any weakening of emphasis on the supremacy of human values. Even death cannot destroy them, he said, for "I go to prepare a place for you, . . . that where I am, there ye may be also." His departure was not to mean their desertion here on earth either, since the Father would send them the Comforter to be their comrade and guide. Again and again he reiterated that the Father loved them. In this speech too he summed up his whole teaching in one new commandment, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." All these are the words of a man devoted to his fellow men and seeking to produce in them moral character like his own.

The teaching of Jesus took account of men not merely as isolated individuals fighting their lone battles for righteousness, but also as members of an inclusive social group whose destinies are all bound up together. The linking of the two great commandments illustrates this. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," is the commandment that points toward the deepening of the inner life of the individual. It indicates the way in which each man must walk to make his own adjustment to the universe. We cannot get along without it, for, after all, there is a sense in which each of us must live his own life for himself and so shape his own destiny.

Obviously, however, that is not the whole story, for no matter how strong a man may be, he cannot step out of his own day or environment. The language we use, the concepts in terms of which we think, the standards of living to which we adjust ourselves, are all established for us when we arrive. None of us grows independently of the social group in which we find ourselves. We are just as truly the creatures of society as we are individuals in our own rights. This fact Jesus recognized by joining to the other commandment a second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Nineteen centuries before the current social psychologists classified themselves, He was a social psychologist, never losing an opportunity to remind men that they were social creatures and must plan their lives in terms of successful living together in groups.

His statement of the case was simple enough. "You are all here together in this world, your lives are inextricably interwoven; the question you have to ask yourselves is, How may we live together successfully?" Then he answered his own question by saying that the only basis on which men can live together successfully is the basis of love; that is to say, of mutual understanding, mutual respect, and mutual helpfulness. This is the gist of his whole teaching concerning human behavior.

Somebody has said that Emerson lets loose something in a man which makes him in his own eyes as good as anyone else. That does not quite describe what Jesus does. He lets loose something in a man which makes other men in his eyes as good as he is. Every word of Jesus calls to the Christ in all of us.

VII

His Character

The supreme fact about Jesus, however, is not his teaching or his conversations or his prayers or his parables or his activities, but his personality, that inmost self which was the true Jesus of whom all these other things were the expressions. The Man himself is the most amazing achievement of human history. We take his own severe standard of judgment, "By their fruits ye shall know them," apply it to him, and find that every word he uttered is made valid by the character he achieved.

It is impossible to reconstruct a complete picture of Jesus out of the fragments which are given us in the Gospels. We do not know whether his eyes were brown or blue, his hair light or dark, straight or wavy; whether he handled tools as one to the manner born or whether he had to struggle long and hard to master them; whether he ever laughed with delight or met affairs more calmly; whether his answers to men's questions came swift as lightning from his lips or whether he spoke deliberately. All these we should like to know, but none of them touches the essential man. The thing we do know is this: he stood up before the very men who had been spying upon him in the dark, setting traps for him in their speech, whispering behind their hands about him, and confronted them with the question, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" No other man who ever lived would have dared to do that with men who knew him so well. He silenced his enemies by daring to challenge them with the integrity of his entire life.

If there is any more searching test of us than the judgment of our enemies, it is that of our friends, for they know us when our guards are down. Yet to his own most intimate friends this Man dared to say, "I am the true and living way."[1] Only one man of the world's history could have said that to the inner circle of his friends without having them laugh in his face. But Jesus' friends did not laugh at it, they cherished it in their hearts as a word which something deep inside them attested to be true. Only once elsewhere is there an "I am" like it, and that is in the story of the voice which came out of the burning bush to Moses saying, "I am that I am." Jesus talked sometimes like God, for in him was the authority of the unsullied soul. His words came unstained all the way from the depths of his heart to his lips.

This fact it is which makes him the unforgettable man. I think the survival of the name of Jesus is the most encouraging fact in the whole history of mankind. Think, for a moment, of what is involved. Jesus was born in an obscure village of an unimportant province of the Roman Empire. He grew up as an ordinary artisan in a town that not only was off the main highways of the world's life but was actually despised by those who knew it best. For a few short months he went about among his own people telling them stories and bringing them good cheer. Following him were twelve men about as provincial and unpromising as any such group could be. Finding himself in a squabble with the religious leaders of the people he was neither able to persuade them of their error nor to rouse the people against them, and so they crucified him before he was thirty-five years old. The Emperor Tiberius never heard of him; he lived and died without causing so much as a ripple in the life of Rome; he left behind him no more than one hundred and twenty people who loved him, yet to-day this provincial Peasant of two thousand years ago is the most powerful personal influence of our contemporary world.

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[1] Moffatt's translation.

Why? Because the one man who has lived without stain is absolutely unforgettable. He is the best of men's dreams come to life. and no man who has ever known the luxury of dreaming can shut him out of his mind. Many stories have been more skillfully told than the story of the Galilæan, but there has never been another such story to tell. Even though he baffles men, he lures them on; though he tantalizes them, they follow. He is the Incomparable Man, and everyone who looks upon him once, whether it be through the cultured eyes of the sophisticated or the curious eyes of the savage, is haunted by him for ever afterward. You simply cannot forget a man who lived as he lived. And you would not even if you could. He loved life well enough to show us what living really is. He is the Man among men.

Those enemies of his rubbed their hands together in glee when they saw him die, their coarse lips parted into cruel smiles as they heard the agony in his tortured voice. They stood in the shadow of Calvary's cross and mocked the suffering Christ. I weep for them as I see them standing there. They are so blind, so blind. If only one of them had thought to bring him one cup of cooling water to allay the fever on his tongue for a single moment, how proud we should have been of him! We would have built him a cathedral more spacious than Saint Peter's and more gloriously located than Saint Paul's. But he was not there. Everybody else was there, but the man with a cup of cold water was absent. The spectators looked on the crucifixion of Christ and never saw it at all.

Yet that cross on which they gazed without understanding is to-day the most powerful moral dynamic in the world. Men get flippant about nearly everything nowadays that is sacred, but nobody jokes about the cross. It is too precious for that. Whatever it may mean in some complicated theological system, we common men who look upon Calvary know what it means to us—that here was a man who kept his faith with himself even in the face of death. All his fine words would have meant nothing, all his noble deeds would have been no more than gestures, if he had compromised at the last. But he did not compromise. His cross sealed his life. It stands forever as a symbol that one Man has lived who believed without wavering that a man's own integrity is his most precious possession, and that if he has to choose between that and life, life itself must be the forfeit. No man can be satisfied to be cheap himself or to hold other men cheap once he has seen the meaning of the cross.

To the disciples it not only meant that, but also that his kind of life was so precious that he could never die at all. He had been alive as nobody else they had ever known had been alive, and these men became possessed with the understanding that Jesus had overcome death, that his was the kind of life that could not be contained in a tomb. Not only did they think that in some supernatural way Jesus was risen, but they knew in their own experience that Christ had come to life in them. When that knowledge took possession of them, then they became just as irresistible as he had been. His character had such vitality in it that it carried on in them and has carried on in his disciples from that day to our own. The world has become the inheritance of the men who have believed that human life is so precious in the sight of the universe that it is not lost even in death. Human values are eternal values, built into the very structure of the universe itself. That is the ethical meaning of the resurrection story.

In his life, his character, his death, and his resurrection Jesus has shown us, as has none other, the superlatively valuable resources that are in man. He has shown us a life without blemish through all its earthly years, and he has shown us that life, obscure though it was in its origins, taking command of the minds of men throughout the centuries that have followed him. Men may become just as cynical as they please about humanity, it still remains true that it was capable of producing Jesus, and a humanity that can do that carries its own assurance of inherent dignity. No man has asked scornfully, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" since Jesus came thence.

No modern cynic can justify his question, "Can any good thing come out of humanity?" until he has explained away the Christ.

Jesus is himself the guarantee of the values that are in man as well as the superlative champion of the way of life that puts human values above all other considerations in determining the righteousness of human conduct. His religion is a restless spirit forever discontent as long as there is human inequality anywhere.

CHAPTER III

THE BEACON LIGHT

In the actual presence of as vivid a religious genius as Jesus, religion seems a perfectly natural and simple experience. There is no apparent need of rationalizing upon it or arguing about it, for the superb Personality himself is the answer to all questions about the reality or the validity of the religious experience. Moreover, in the case of Jesus particularly, he himself seemed never to know any of the shadows cast upon experience by intellectual doubts, so complete was his own faith and so rich his own experience. As long as he was with them, his followers were so absorbed by him that they accepted his teaching, and it was enough for them.

Inevitably, however, there came the day when they had to face the world without him. That meant that they had to think through the whole religious problem for themselves, to be ready to make answer to whatever questions might be raised, and to develop an ordered system of teaching for those to whom they came to present their story. Following the usual line of the development of religion under such circumstances, the Christian religion became a philosophy, a history, and an ethic. That is to say, it developed its own interpretation of the meaning of the universe and of human experience, it gathered together its stories of its outstanding men and women, and it produced a code of conduct.

Important names may be listed in all three of these fields, but it is a revealing commentary on the nature of our religion that every one of its epochal revivals has been the result of the reawakening of moral passion in some man or group of men. The vitality of our religion has come from its ability to arouse men to deep feeling over human wrongs. Righteous indignation over social evils has been the origin of practically every new impetus that has come in our religious history. The same spirit which in the Hebrew prophets gave a new lease of life to the religion of the Hebrews has in our Christian story been the source whence our faith has drawn the renewal of its life. It is prophetic zeal which has kept Christianity alive. The fire which kindled in the men of the Old Testament and flared into a flame in the life of Jesus has been the beacon light in the hearts of the heroes of Christianity who have illuminated for all generations the Christian way of life.

I

John The Beloved

The member of the original apostolic band who has had the most influence on subsequent Christian history is John. It is therefore worthy of notice that he is the one writer of the New Testament who allows no other emphasis to share even for a moment in his insistence upon love as the heart of the whole Christian message. His statement is so uncompromising that there can be no possible doubt about what he meant, and no possible paraphrase which will make it more emphatic, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."

Sometimes we get the impression that John was a sort of starry-eyed mystic whose approach to experience was on so unreal a basis that he has very little to say to practical men. We interpret his word "love" as meaning an inner glow that came to a visionary whose eyes were not on the things of this world. Undoubtedly, John did have the strange light of the seer in his eyes, but the fires of vision at which he kindled that light shone with relentless glare upon the evil ways of men. It was a flame that scorched as well as illuminated. It was he who wrote, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also." These are not the words of one lost in his own enjoyment of some spiritual trance but of one who tarries with God until his heart burns with God's own love for his fellow men.

Like his Master he is pragmatic in his judgment of the value and validity of religious experience, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." And again, "Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." These are echoes of Him who said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Even more like that word of Jesus is his straightforward linking of orthodox belief and right practice in the saying, "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."

His whole interpretation of the meaning of life grows out of his fundamental conviction expressed in the familiar but always lovely phrase, "God is love." In the mind of John, the Eternal was not some vague concept cold and aloof, but one who watched over and cared for men with all the richness of his infinite life. Convinced that God loved all men alike, the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the white and the colored, it was natural that John should insist that the divine life was in no man who differentiated between other men and hated some.

Our religion says that God cares for every breathing man as a Father caring for his son. Once let that get into the hearts and minds of men, and the strong will immediately feel their responsibility to care for the weak, the privileged for the underprivileged, and the well for the sick. Those who are seeking to be like Him, whose love reaches to all men and women, will never rest content while there is even the suspicion of hatred in their hearts anywhere. This is the simple but far-reaching ethic propounded by the beloved disciple. He may be the profoundest of theologians, as some have claimed; but if so, then we must add that his teaching is no cold intellectual theory but theology on fire.

In the beautiful though brief second letter of John, written evidently by one grown old, there is again the assertion that all commandments may be found in one, "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another." It is a long trail that has led the man who wrote this from that hour when he desired to call down fire upon a Samaritan village that would not receive Jesus, to this moment when he calculates all as valueless save love, and somewhere along the journey the son of thunder has been transformed into the apostle of good will. He has lived so long and so intimately with the spirit of his Lord that he has learned his passion for men. In him it was a mystical glow as vivid and as genuine as his love and knowledge of God. Indissolubly united in his mind were religion and ethics, for even in the third Epistle he returns again to the position, "He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."

When the disciple who best understood his Master had to interpret that Master to men, he found one word sufficient to portray him, and that word was love. The disciple whom Jesus loved became the apostle of brotherhood. When he sought to define God's will he found it all in one commandment, "Love one another." The first thrust of Christianity began with a man who felt himself called to an adventure of loving service to his fellows, who sought to prove his knowledge of God by meeting men with love.

II

PAUL

While John was preaching his gospel of love, Paul was also engaged in his herculean efforts to present Christ to the world. It would be all but impossible to exaggerate the contribution that this man has made to our Christian story. He it was who launched the missionary enterprise which has been the glory of our faith through all its history. Plunging into the pagan regions of the world and winning men to Christ from all races and groups, he freed the new gospel from its provincial limitations and saved Christianity from becoming merely a Jewish sect. Facing older systems of thought with his novel teaching, he had to work out a system of doctrine that would answer the questions he found he had to meet. Preacher, missionary, statesman, theologian, his influence in Christian thinking has been excelled by none save that of the Master himself.

It was no easy task that he faced, when as a Jew and a Pharisee he had to adjust his own thinking and his own conduct to his decision to become a follower of Jesus of Nazareth. He had been trained with the utmost rigor to believe that his people were the peculiar people of God, and that the law of Moses was the last word in religious authority. He had now to wrestle with a religion that had no place for provincialism, and which defined righteousness in terms that were altogether new to him. He never ceased to be a Jew, with a peculiar tug at his heart when he thought of his own people. Writing to the church in Rome, he still finds room to say, "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." In a good deal of his writing you find him trying to find the answer to his twofold problem—how is the doctrine of the Christ related to the thought of the Jews as the chosen people? What is the relation between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of Christ? He never gave up the attempt to think these questions through.

In most cases his letters discuss these and kindred matters with the result that his main emphasis in most of them is doctrinal. The first question he answered uncompromisingly. The spirit of Jesus within him completely broke down his inherited provincialism so that he wrote, "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." The insight that God plays no favorites among his children but is Father also of the Gentiles became the conviction which sent him out to his epochal life-work. It was a personal victory over the narrow nationalism in which he had been trained. It became a cosmic victory when he confronted the apostles with it and won their consent to go preach to the uncircumcised.

Paul's whole ministry began with a realization of the equal value of all men in the eyes of God. Men as men became the first consideration in his sight when he looked at the world through the eyes of Christ. The first thing that happened to him when he became converted was to get a new interest in men about whom he had never cared before. The missionary activity of Christianity began with a man in whom burned a passion for his fellow men regardless of their race. Before the heavenly vision came to him Paul thought of himself as a brother of every descendant of Abraham; after it he knew that he was a brother of all men everywhere. When the apostle discovered God as his Father he discovered men and women as his brothers and sisters. All the little fences that divided him from his fellows collapsed in the face of that discovery.

When he discussed the second question which bothered him, the nature of Christian righteousness, he gave us his most characteristic doctrine, that of justification by faith. He was a thoroughgoing realist who looked at the world just as it was. Consequently, as he passed from city to city he did not close his eyes to the wickedness on every hand, nor did he shrink from contact with the rough sailors who plied those boats on which he passed from port to port. With so much evidence of wickedness all about him it was natural that he should be impressed by human sinfulness and feel that there was no hope for righteousness in man until he learned to draw upon the resources of God by faith. No piling up of right deeds, he felt, could offset the inherent wickedness of any man, consequently our only hope is to lay hold on the mercy of God by faith and find forgiveness. "The just shall live by faith." Clearly and emphatically he states that salvation can come by faith and faith alone.

When, however, he begins to define what he means by faith, we realize that he is not talking about some magical word which has nothing to do with practical affairs, for he continually asserts that we prove our faith by our works. Instead of repealing the laws of right conduct, faith gives them a new and stronger emphasis in our lives. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." The disputings over the relative importance of faith and works in the thought of Paul and of James simply reveal that the disputants have never defined faith as the apostle himself did, and consequently have never faced up to its ethical implications. Faith, in his thinking, meant a vivid experience of God which proved its reality by purging the life of uncleanness. He is not outside the ranks of the ethical adventurers; he is most decidedly in them, although his vocabulary is not always the same as that of his comrades. Jesus spoke in the language of the Galilæan peasant, John used the words of the fisherman, Paul expressed himself in the terms of the student and philosopher.

His whole ministry gained its character from his devotion to his fellow men, so that it is not surprising to find him sometimes bursting forth into almost extravagant phrases of devotion to them. There is an echo of Gethsemane itself in such words as these: "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren." Surely, no man has ever used a more exalted expression concerning the power of redeemed humanity than his: "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Certainly, the love which God bears the men of the world has never been put into lovelier words than he used: "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is his statement that we are living in an ethical world that cares for men and women, and is not indifferent to their happiness.

When he left his more ambitious thinking to touch mundane affairs, he made it perfectly clear that he was presenting an ethical and not a merely other-worldly faith. His most nobly sustained intellectual effort is the letter to the Romans which no man of alert mind and active imagination can read without feeling its lift and sweep. It is a marvelous piece of writing, rich in imagery, closely knit in texture, lofty in vision, cosmic in its inclusiveness. Standing all alone, it would put Paul among the immortals. Yet he does not close even this majestic work without coming down to particulars in a practical conclusion that includes such exhortations as, "Let love be without dissimulation . . . Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another. . . . Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. . . . If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. . . . If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. . . . Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. . . . Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

If there ever was any doubt in anyone's mind about the fundamentally ethical character of the religion Paul taught, it would certainly be dispelled by the discussion which reaches its climax in the thirteenth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians. It is written to a Christian community which is divided over the relative importance of various spiritual gifts—tongues, healing, teaching, miracles, and so forth. After pointing out that the welfare of the whole group depends upon the individual contribution of each man according to his own gifts, Paul swings into his interpretation of the one gift without which all others are empty. That one all-important gift is active love.

It is that warm interest in our fellows which gives the words we utter the power to find men where they live, which gives prophecy its grip upon the conscience, and which makes knowledge a valuable tool. Even faith without it is negative, signifying nothing. It is the one factor of experience which cannot fail. When heaven and earth shall pass away and all men's pride be laid in the dust of forgotten days, three things shall remain, never to pass away—"faith, hope, and love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

Lest anyone should think that Paul meant by love merely the love which men feel for God, without relating it to usefulness in human service, we do well to read the opening verses of the fourteenth chapter, where he makes it plain beyond doubt that the gift has value only as it serves men. "In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." He, like his Master, insists that spiritual attainment is not for personal exploitation but for human helping.

With all the emphasis that his fine mind put upon straight thinking in religion, and all the insistence of his noble spirit on the dependence of men upon the mercy and righteousness of God, it still remains true that the great apostle of the Gentiles never for a moment let up in his presentation of religion as a crusade for the enrichment of every human life that can be reached.

III

The Gospel of Liberty

When Paul began his aggressive missionary propaganda, he found himself dealing with a society in which slavery was flourishing and religion was decadent. So much is said by the ancient writers about liberty and freemen that we have to be continually reminding ourselves that the civilizations of Greece and Rome were, from beginning to end, slave-civilizations. The much-vaunted liberty was the possession of a privileged few. There were always more slaves than free men in both Athens and Rome. Moreover, by the time Paul reached the Eternal City the old religion was so thoroughly discredited in the minds of thinking men that the augurs themselves winked at each other when they met in the Via Sacra.

It was not altogether strange, therefore, that a religious voice with genuine conviction should gain a hearing among many who were honestly seeking an answer to the mysteries of life. And it certainly is not a matter for wonder that the submerged two thirds of the people who were slaves should listen eagerly to a voice that proposed a new motive for society, namely, the exaltation of human values. The message of the inherent dignity of human life proclaimed by men on fire with enthusiasm naturally took root first in the hearts of the slaves. The spirit of Jesus in the heart of Paul, himself a free citizen of the Roman Empire, caused him to forget all false distinctions of rank, and to become the friend and helper of the bondmen whom he reached. He did not stop with wearying questions of bond or free, he met each man who came to him as a man.

In other words, a civilization carried on the backs of slaves was confronted by a religion opposed in every one of its ethical principles to the whole slave system. Nor must we slide over that statement without reminding ourselves that any attack on slavery was an attack on property rights, on a whole economic order, on tradition, on accepted social practices, and on law. It was radicalism of the deepest red. Yet a first fact about Christian practice was that freemen and slaves knelt together at the Christian altar while their lips repeated in unison, "Our Father." They all listened to one Master, whose words, "All ye are brethren," were repeated in their ears. The owner rubbed shoulders with his chattel slave while the reader flung out those words that were such brave words in a world of tyranny, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Men have sometimes scoffed at the early history of Christianity, dubbing it a slave religion. We make no apology for that; we boast of it. The spirit of Jesus has always been expert in finding the forgotten men and in uncovering the loveliness of human lives that seemed unlovely.

In Paul's letter to Philemon we have an indication of how the apostle actually met a real situation involving a master and his slave. I have no space here to analyze the letter from the point of view of its skill and tact, although that would be worth doing, for it is one of the most cleverly phrased of letters. What I want here to do is to show the situation out of which it arose, and Paul's thoroughly Christian attitude toward both the men involved. Onesimus, a slave of Philemon's, had run away from his master and so had incurred the penalty of death. Coming to Rome, however, he fell in with Paul and became a Christian. Naturally, he confessed his fault, with the result that Paul, under whose ministry Philemon also had become a Christian, sent him back to his master carrying the letter which we call in the New Testament the Epistle to Philemon.

It is noteworthy that the aged apostle not only asks his friend to forgive his returning slave and spare his life, but also to receive him "not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved." This man who had stood before the court to say, "I am a Roman citizen," now writes concerning a fugitive slave, "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus." It is reminiscent of that wonderful saying of Jesus himself when, after they told him that his mother and brothers were waiting for him, he turned to the people who were listening to him eagerly, and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren!" Barriers of caste and family go down when the love of God reveals the deeper kinship of all men to those who enter into it.

In its very first impact with the great world Christianity found itself in conflict with the current human estimates and consequently with contemporary ethical practices. While it was building its system of doctrine and dogma it never wavered in its insistence upon the first ethical principle, the eternal value of every individual man in the sight of God. Men did not realize the revolutionary social implications of that emphasis at first, but the life that was in it worked like leaven until it began to be clear that the society called the kingdom of

God could not dwell at peace within the social order called the Roman Empire as long as the latter bought and sold men like cattle in the market place. The religion of brotherhood and the empire of prostitution could never come to terms unless one of them or both of them compromised.

Unfortunately, compromise came in. An emasculated Christianity was accepted by Constantine, and was established as the imperial religion. Thus did Christianity become respectable. It gave the Roman Empire a hundred extra years of life and set back the history of the world at least a thousand, for, from that day to this, the religion of Jesus has had little chance among men. Instead of continuing as the opponent of conditions that were built on inhumanity, organized Christianity became the apologist of the established order, state-owned, state-controlled, subservient. The saddest day in the history of Christianity was when the church crowned the first Christian emperor, for on that day she stood with her Master on the mount from which he saw the kingdoms of this world; she heard the same tempter whisper in her ear, but, unlike him, she did not turn away.

Nevertheless, so vivid was the contrast between the institution of slavery and the

Christian message that even so great a compromise could not conceal it. The gospel moved out on a world where human bondage was a commonplace and has given into our hands a world where it is recognized as theoretically indefensible, and in which public opinion is steadily moving forward to its complete elimination. No man who enjoys liberty should oppose a practical and ethical teaching of the religion of Jesus, for he owes his own liberty, in no small part, to a religion that dared to proclaim the dignity of all human beings in the midst of an empire grown fat on the prostitution of human flesh and blood.

IV

INSTITUTIONALIZED CHRISTIANITY

Securely established in Rome, and free from persecution throughout the Empire, Christianity was now at liberty to devote itself to its own organization. Religious struggles developed which were not for human rights but for political power. The church became the end and men the means to serve that end, where, in the beginning, human welfare had been the end and the church the instrument to serve it. Christianity became an ecclesiasticism, and when the flame of its ethical passion burned low, then Europe was plunged into the Dark Ages.

The story of these years is largely one of a succession of controversies over doctrinal matters, most of which seem dim and unreal to us. Such controversies mean that the energy of the church was being turned toward internal disputes rather than against the fundamentally unchristian practices of the times. It became more important to be orthodox than to be ethical; incestuous Popes might occupy the Vatican as long as they could mouth the creeds. We need have little wonder that the most ineffective years of Christian history were these.

Some gleaming names shine out from even these dark days. The "golden-mouthed" Chrysostom swayed first Antioch and then Constantinople with his eloquence on themes, be it noted, which were eminently social—dealing with the Christian conduct of life. His fearless preaching aroused the antipathy of the empress, whose successful persecution of him is a telling comment on both the seamy side of imperial interference in ecclesiastical affairs and the low estate into which the church itself had fallen. Jerome is chiefly remarkable for his scholarship, out of which came that translation of the Scriptures which we know as the Vulgate. Augustine was the most inclusive religious genius of the ancient church, whose own experience of divine grace was so vivid that it suffused with a glow of life everything he wrote. His outstanding piece of writing was his *City of God*, in which he drew shrewdly and sharply the contrast between the Earthly City governed by love of self even to contempt of God, and the City of God governed by love of God even to contempt of self. From him mediæval Roman Catholicism drew much that was most characteristic in it. Yet, strangely enough, he was also the spiritual father of much of the thinking which came out of the Reformation. He insisted on man's salvation by the free grace of God even while he thought of the visible, hierarchically organized church as the very City of God which must ultimately come to rule the world. These two emphases led him into profound contradictions in his work, yet his insistence on man as the honored recipient of God's grace never wavered.

Later than these men, in the days which marked the sordid bickerings between Pope and Emperor, emerged the great mystics with their strong emphasis upon the inner life. Francis of Assisi was the greatest of them, the little troubadour of God whose artless spirit loved every tree and every bird that nested in it, whose hands could not be idle as long as a single house of God was in disarray, whose faith took him even into the presence of the sultan of the Turks if haply he might be won to the true God. Later there were such mystics as Meister Eckhart, John Tauler, and Thomas à Kempis whose *Imitation of Christ* probably has been the most influential manual of private devotion the church has produced. The point about these men that interests us here is that they were individualists in the midst of a rigid institutionalism. They were the voices of the eternal protest of the human spirit against absolute authority. The church has always been willing to canonize its mystics after their deaths, but it has always been a little uneasy over them while they were alive. Francis of Assisi, for example, was never quite acceptable to the Popes of his day although they capitalized on his reputation with great skill in their later appropriation and exploitation of the order of the Franciscans. Allowing for all the exaggerations of mysticism, the experiences of the genuine mystics were nevertheless the stirrings of actual life within the hard shell of ecclesiasticism.

In spite, however, of these flashes of genuine spiritual experience and ethical passion the victory during these centuries lay with the institutional ideal. The religion of Jesus was lost in loyalty to the church. At the head stood the Pope surrounded by his cardinals, himself an emperor among emperors, and they princes as powerful as any scions of the world's royal houses. Beneath the college of cardinals came the archbishops, bishops, monsignors, priests, and brothers, a well-knit hierarchy reaching down to every parish in Christendom, working incessantly with but a single purpose—the aggrandizement of the church and the enrichment of its coffers. Never has Europe seen so thoroughly articulated an organization covering so wide a territory, so uniquely devoted to one single end. The church was the one power with which even emperors dared not to dispute.

Its only weakness was that it forgot the one end for which it was made. It grew to hold men as cheap as secular states held them. Superstition and fear it exploited for its own purposes instead of spending itself to drive them out of all human experience everywhere. The poverty of the poor it drew upon for its own treasuries instead of pouring out its wealth to alleviate their suffering. Even men's sins it pardoned for a price which went into the building of a basilica when it might have been giving of its inspiration to help men conquer sin through God's free grace. Christianity sank to its lowest ebb when the Christian Church became a mere institution using men instead of serving them, and its Christ became no more than an unfeeling caricature of the Carpenter of Nazareth.

V

LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION

When the Reformation came, it was a social revolt, not a doctrinal quarrel. It was a protest against an institution that was using its prestige to aggrandize itself at the expense of the very people whom it was professing to serve. The whole Reformation movement resulted from a resurgence of moral idealism. It was made possible by men who were capable of righteous indignation. Hilaire Belloc, the most brilliant of contemporary apologists for the Roman Catholic Church, has written a volume called, *How The Reformation Happened*, in which he sets forth the Roman view of the whole event. The book is vitiated by his premise, which is that the conflict was between Calvinistic theology and Roman dogma. He has failed to see the main fact in the whole phenomenon, namely, that the Reformers were primarily interested in breaking down an institution which they believed to be a social menace.

The doctrinal controversy was distinctly second, both in sequence and in importance. The Protestant Church began with men who put human above institutional values. It was an ethical protest against religion as magic and ecclesiasticism.

As early as the middle of the fourteenth century the voice of Wyclif was being heard in England protesting against the wealth of the clergy and the practices of the church in playing politics to enrich itself. Although he was the ablest mind in his country and had been primarily trained as a theologian, his protest against the church of his day was ethical. He opposed the hierarchy because it had forsaken the service of men for its own glory. Huss carried Wyclif's crusade into Bohemia, where he attained such power over the people that the Council of Constance could not ignore him but condemned him to be burned at the stake. In the course of their conflict with Rome these two men found it necessary to formulate their intellectual positions in substantial detail, and it is interesting to note that they centered their attack on those two strongholds of magic in the Roman system, the doctrine of transubstantiation and the supremacy of the papacy. But what I want us to see here is that their whole revolt began with an attack upon the unethical practices of a church eager for earthly power and unscrupulous in taxgathering. They were fighting not the church's beliefs but its practices.

At the crossroads of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries stands that somewhat enigmatic figure, Erasmus. He was the perfect intellectual, having the spirit of a humanist, the mind of a scholar, the pen of a *littérateur*, the wit of a cynic, and the humor of a gentleman. Of all his gifts, strangely enough, it is his humor that has robbed him of the homage of history. The man who keeps his sense of humor keeps his perspectives clear, and Erasmus had the misfortune to be born in an age when seeing things too clearly made a man ineffective. It was an age of gigantic conflict when passions ran high. Its titans were fanatics. The curse of Erasmus was that he saw both sides of the quarrel so clearly that he could take neither one of them with abandon. Too clear-sighted not to see the corruption of the Roman Church, he was at the same time too cultured not to be repelled by the excesses of the Lutheran revolution.

Nevertheless, Erasmus cannot be dismissed lightly, for while he lacked the driving power of the crusader, he it was, more than any other man, who formulated the issues on which the battle of the Reformation was fought. He arraigned with merciless satire the evils of his age in both church and state, and made all the empty liturgies of fastings, pilgrimages, and other external observances the butt of his caustic wit. In his *Handbook of the Christian Soldier* he has given us an unadorned discussion of an unecclesiastical Christianity, going back for its authority to the Sermon on the Mount. His was a universal, essentially ethical theism, which came to its highest expression in Jesus. First, last, and all the time, he insisted that any religion must prove its validity by its ethical practice. He was a humanist in religion as well as in letters.

All that was literature in Erasmus became flame in Luther. In him was a sort of primitive energy that knew neither weariness, fear, nor compromise. Always restless, discontented with his religious experience even when his faithfulness had brought him earlier advancement in his order than he might have expected, the whole power of his ruthless emotions was let loose when a man, bargaining the grace of God against the sins of men for a price, approached his city. He took up arms against an institution that was willing to prostitute its most sacred function to fill its coffers with gold, or to erect a lofty house upon a hill merely as a monument of its own glory. Neither the prestige of the papacy nor the glamour of Saint Peter's could so dazzle this man's eyes that he could not see the ignorant men and women who were being driven into deeper and deeper superstition by the very institution that professed to serve them in the name of God.

His whole career was epitomized in the most dramatic moment of the modern world, that moment when he made his answer to the Diet assembled at Worms. Before him sat all the powers of his world. On one side were the Emperor and his followers representing the controlling secular power. On the other side were the personal representatives of the Pope, and all the servants of the hierarchy, holding in their hands the relentless might of the mediæval church. Before them he stood alone. When they insisted that he recant the words he had written in his books, copies of which were before them, he looked them steadily in their faces, one man against a whole society, and refused, saying, "Here I stand, God helping me, I can do no other." In that moment not only a new church but a new world was born. A man put his own conscience over against a whole empire and a whole church and said that it outweighed them both. It was the assertion of the supreme prerogative of the individual life. And it was the heart of the Reformation.

Many events of importance followed whose story we cannot tell here. Many names cry for recognition—Melanchthon, who was Luther's complement; Calvin, who was Protestantism's most comprehensive mind; Zwingli, who became Christ's apostle to Switzerland; and many others. Here, however, I simply want to make clear, that the great revival of religion which we call the Protestant Reformation had its origin in no supernatural experience, no doctrinal controversy, but in an ethical revolt against an inhumane institutionalism.

Naturally, there followed the days of intellectual readjustment, for not only did these men have to modify Christian theology to meet the new demand for liberty, but they also had to produce writings that could meet the needs and use the language of the intellectual revolution of their day. They were men of the Renaissance as well as of the Reformation. You cannot divide them. In the world of the revival of learning some sort of religious reconstruction was inevitable. It was characteristic of the religion of Jesus that when that reconstruction came, it began with the exaltation of the values inherent in human lives.

VI

The Wesleyan Revival

The story of religion in England since the year 1500 has been curiously muddled. The Reformation, as a resurgence of idealism, hardly touched southern Britain at all, in spite of the fact that John Knox gave it effective expression in Scotland. The unbending will of the dynast, Henry VIII, and the shrewd political manipulations of his rapacious servant, Thomas Cromwell, brought England to its break with Rome on purely secular grounds. The interlude of Mary Tudor's reign was not long enough to re-establish the connections with the hierarchy which her father had severed and her brother's counselors had not healed. Elizabeth, embittered by her own early experiences with the church, and smarting under the treatment meted out to her by her sister, came to the throne with a personal grudge against the Roman Catholic Church which made her adamant in her opposition to it. The Reformation in England was too largely a dynastic device and a Tudor family quarrel to have any profound ethical significance.

Nevertheless, the break with Rome did come, and public opinion in England accepted and approved it. When James I came down from

Scotland to succeed Elizabeth he adopted the Established Church in England without making any effort to swing his new kingdom to the traditional Stuart faith. His son was not as wise as he in the administration of either secular or ecclesiastical affairs. Accordingly, the spirit of yeoman England awoke in the Puritan Revolution.

Although it is generally accepted in these days that the Puritans were a set of unintelligent boors with no aim but to take the joy out of life, they were not that at all. On the contrary, they were honest men who were suspicious of all privileged classes, whether in church or state, and who, therefore, were determined that no autocracy should be set up in their land either by the house of Stuart or by the Pope of Rome. They revolted for sweet liberty's sake. Their primary purpose was to safeguard the common men of England from all tyranny whether of princes or of bishops. We admit that they themselves succumbed to the temptations of power when it was given into their hands, but that does not blot out the fact that the revival of the religious and national spirit in England in the seventeenth century had its origin in a mighty indignation aroused by the twofold threat of church and state against human rights.

It is ridiculous to inveigh against the Puritans as incapable of æsthetic appreciation when they presented us with the epical imagination of John Milton, as true a poet and as genuine a Puritan as ever lived. Even greater than Milton in force of character and iron will was Oliver Cromwell, who was comparable to Luther himself in that elemental force which is characteristic of individuals who change the courses of the streams of history. When, however, Cromwell's personality was withdrawn and the fresh impulse of the Puritan Revival had spent itself, there came the reaction which recalled the Stuarts to the throne and dissipation to the haunts of the people. The England of the period following the restoration of Charles II saw the privileged classes more devoted to dalliance and the submerged classes more sunk in shame than any period of the nation's history.

It was into this England that John Wesley was born. For though the throne had been transferred from the querulous James II to William of Orange, and the ruling power from the throne to Parliament, it still remained true that religion was a joke, morality was out of fashion, and the masses of the poor were ignorant and brutal to a degree which we of the modern world cannot conceive.

These were the conditions which so weighed upon the hearts of the little group of devout students at Oxford that they formed the Holy Club. They were driven to their knees by a society which had forgotten God and was indifferent to righteousness. After they had discovered themselves, the two Wesleys and Whitefield never for a moment ceased to cry aloud against the evil practices which were poisoning the lives of those about them. It is quite inadequate to interpret the Wesleyan Revival merely as an emotional or supernatural phenomenon; it was a social protest that became a social revolution.

The Methodist Church, in all its branches, is the least result of the Methodist revival. It aroused the clergy of the Church of England from their carelessness and indolence so that the fox-hunting parson and absentee rector of Walpole's day became a memory. It stirred the moral conscience of the whole country so that the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the filth which had characterized literature since the Restoration, disappeared. It was the origin of the steady attempt which has never ceased from that day to this to remedy the guilt, dispel the ignorance, relieve the physical suffering, and lighten the social degradation of the profligate and the poor. The genius of Jesus was in the Wesleyan Revival, for it did not spend its strength in disputings and cavillings, but aroused men to find their forgotten fellows and to serve them. Immorality has never been as easy or human life as cheap in England since the work of the Wesleys.

John Wesley was by every instinct of his nature and by every influence of his training a conservative. He shrank from new ways. He abhorred anything that looked like division from the old church. He would have liked to walk as his father walked, in the traditional paths of the priesthood of the Established Church. But he could not. And the reason he could not was that he was haunted by the faces of men dying without a fair chance at the privileges of life. In his heart was a flame of indignation against a society that was unclean, ungodly, and cruel.

When his flaming words became too hot for the churches, he went out into the fields where men walked whose feet had never crossed the threshold of any house of prayer. Under God's own sky he looked into the grimy faces of the miners worn with subterranean toil, into the dull faces of the city slums whence hope had fled, into the tawny faces of laborers tanned by the sun. He discovered Englishmen whom both the rulers and the bishops had forgotten. The great religious revival came when that man appeared who was capable of moral indignation and conscious of the dignity of human lives that everyone else held cheap. The religious revival gave proof of its vitality in the social reformation which it accomplished. The common people of France opened the eyes of their aristocrats with a guillotine; John Wesley opened the eyes of England with a heart of love.

His work had its extravagances, of course. He was an eighteenth-century man dealing with eighteenth-century men and women, and he could no more step out of his century than we can. It is just as foolish to condemn him because he did not use twentieth-century methods as it is to condemn the modern church because it does not reproduce eighteenth-century behavior. The proof that the Spirit of God was in the Wesleyan Revival is not to be found in the emotional extravagances of those who groaned, or rolled on the floor, or wept without restraint, but in the fact that human conduct became cleaner and human life became more tolerable in England because Wesley passed that way.

VII

WILLIAM BOOTH AND THE SALVATION ARMY

At the beginning of its life the Wesleyan Church was close to the submerged groups of people, being largely recruited from them. It is, however, a curious fact of church history that it is difficult for an organization of really devout Christians to remain poor. The reason is not far to seek. A disciplined Christian is industrious, sober, and thrifty; and these are the very qualities that make for financial success. The result is that the second and third generations of children born in families touched by a movement like the Methodist Revival find themselves members of the middle class financially and socially. They have lost all sense of belonging with the poor. Their church becomes a middle class church, eminently respectable, and probably somewhat smug.

This is precisely what happened to the Methodists. Originally social outcasts, dubbed nonconformists and looked upon as schismatics, they grew to be accepted, recognized as being just as much a part of the accepted world as the Established Church itself. They became absorbed by the social order. Partaking of the fat things of the world in which they found themselves, they also learned its apathy, so that, while they were very zealous with their own kind, they forgot the outcast and the destitute. Thus did the church of the Wesleys run the danger of going the way of all churches, of becoming merely an institution, of forgetting that passion for the underprivileged men which was the very breath of its founders.

It was recalled to its true work by one who was not allowed to stay within its ranks. The work of William Booth can no more be reckoned merely in terms of the Salvation Army than that of Wesley in terms of the Methodists. Booth recalled a nation to its responsibility for poverty and drunkenness and crime. He awakened the conscience of the churches of England, with the result that every one of them girded itself to a new effort in behalf of the classes it had forgotten. He quickened the religious experience of the whole nation. Every humane impulse which Wesley had stirred into action gained a new impetus from the work of this tremendous man and his amazing wife.

The commission under which William Booth marched was the same as that of his Master, that "the poor have the gospel preached to them." He left the organized Christianity of his day because it was so busy maintaining its own life that it had no energy left with which to fight the battles or meet the needs of those whom a pagan society was neglecting. He had the mad courage of a man consumed by a passion, and went out without script or wallet or staff, to spend and to be spent in the service of men and women whom nobody else considered worth their thought. Absorbed in their interests, he knew the joy of the life without compromise.

Without any delay, as soon as his decision was reached, he plunged into the most crowded and destitute section of London, to do for those living under the worst conditions he knew whatever he felt led of God to do. There is something thrillingly heroic in the picture of this man lifting his face against the squalor and wickedness of London's East End, in the hope that his faith might bring a little light into its dark night.

He went to the saloons at closing time to pick up the drunken men thrown upon the street, that he might tell them of a power that could save them from their curse; he gathered the dwarfed children of the slums together, the children who had never known any natural love, and told them of One who gathered the children in his arms, until little voices began to make city streets sweet with the melody, "Jesus loves me, this I know"; he went into the unspeakable filth and stench of rooms where the poor lay dying and told them of Him who conquered death, until those crowded tenements marveled to see men and women die with triumphant smiles upon their lips. Catherine and William together, they went like angels, carrying their lamp of love to men and women who had never dared to dream that they mattered at all. They lighted the faces of the forgotten people with the little lamp of Christ.

They were abused ofttimes by those whom they sought to help. Comfortable humorists sitting in lazy chairs poked fun at them. Respectable religionists lifted their eyebrows at their lilting gospel melodies and unconventional street meetings. But they looked into one another's eyes and knew that they were loving men as He had loved them. So they were content to go out again in the morning. They brought a new revival of religion to an indifferent land. And it was a revival of the religion of Jesus, for it began with a man and woman who remembered the people everybody else forgot, and who gave their all to serve them.

VIII

The Social Gospel

We have passed into a day that is very different from that of Wesley or of Booth in its social organization. All thinkers have been forced to make a more searching analysis of social processes because of the social revolution, which has come upon us as a result of the industrial revolution and the revolution in communications. This has led to a restatement of certain fundamental Christian teachings. We have begun to ask ourselves whether our religion has a definite message for an age that recognizes social influences to be as determinative in the formation of human character as personal decision.

Without doubt man has evolved not as an isolated individual but as a part of a larger organized group. Primeval man, even our prehuman progenitors, lived in society. Out of this social mingling have come some of the most characteristic activities of human experience. The moral sense itself probably had its origin in such social attributes as pleasure in the society of one's fellows, desire for social approbation, sympathy, the performance of services for others, and the fact that the well-knit tribe would have advantages over all others. Language is a creation of society. It is a little difficult to conceive of the development of the intellectual faculty without social experience, for its history shows it to be largely dependent upon imitation and accumulated experience.

Recognizing these facts, and putting alongside them the further one that competition is itself also an aspect of social life, we have come back to our religion asking it definitely whether it has anything to offer as a guide to right ethical standards for society, or in showing us a way to social control. As a critique of the personal life and as an aid to right personal living it has demonstrated its efficiency. But in a day when the individual is becoming more and more absorbed by society, and when his own conduct is passing more and more out of his own control, a merely individualistic ethic is not sufficient. We must discover a new motive for society.

Looking upon our society with the eyes of Jesus, we cannot but become conscious that beneath all the apparent prosperity and luxury of our present order there are men and women working for a wage less than they can possibly live upon decently, and through long hours that inevitably make any kind of abundant life impossible. Behind the colorful dresses of the fortunate ladies are the sweatshop conditions of the seamstresses who make them. Back of the fine automobiles of the prosperous is the periodic employment of the factory hands who live constantly with the specter before them of the days when they will be laid off. With all the talk of the full dinner pail, the average wage of the American factory worker is still less than twenty-seven dollars a week. Even the railroad employees, whose wages are watched by well-organized unions, earn on the average, when you exclude general and division officers, less than sixteen hundred and fifty dollars a year.

While such conditions prevail alongside fortunes that run into the billions and luxury that makes no pretense of economy in satisfying the demands of the privileged classes, we cannot fail to insist that the actual results of our present social order are in acute contradiction to the Christian conceptions of justice and brotherhood. It is all very well to say that spiritually minded people will rise above material considerations and produce radiant characters even in the midst of abject poverty. That is wonderfully and beautifully true. But that does not take away from us the obligation to see to it that no life goes out handicapped into the world because of social conditions which can be mended. We must remind ourselves that Jesus put into his model prayer the petition for bread, recognizing thereby that no man can be expected to know much about the abundant life whose elemental needs are not met. The problem of Christianizing the social order includes within it all the tasks of practical Christianity which aim at enriching human lives.

This means that the advocates of the social gospel, who refuse to let our capitalistic civilization forget the submerged man, are in direct spiritual succession from those who have given our religion its vitality through all the years. They stand before the monarchs of our contemporary world as Nathan stood before David and demand a reckoning for the obscure man. They confront all the institutions, which seem so strong among us, with Jesus' own word that institutions are made for men and not men for institutions. They insist on the supremacy of human values over all others. In a day when old shibboleths are passing and old catchwords mean nothing, they have given a new vitality to religion by reviving its ethical passion. They are insisting that we shall have the courage to face all the implications of the religion of Jesus for the society in which we find ourselves.

PART II

THE GOLDEN LAMP

FOREWORD

We have now seen that the whole genius of the religion of Jesus is so closely allied to a moral passion for human well-being that we may fairly say that progress in Christian insight and character has at all times been dependent upon it. The Scripture and history of our faith combine to illuminate for us the fact that Jesus was motivated by a consuming desire to bring more truth, more goodness, and more beauty into the lives of all men everywhere. "I am come," said he, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

The point I want to make in this second section is a complementary one. I want to show that as the philosophers have tried to read the riddle of the universe in their own way, they too have come to their profoundest insights as they have allowed humane considerations to guide their thinking. The survival power of any philosophy is directly proportional to its contribution to the enrichment of human lives. In other words, the most searching test of a philosophy is its ethical passion. Those philosophers continue to sway men who are themselves swayed by a conviction of the dignity and value of men.

Although for some time I hesitated to insert this section, feeling that perhaps it was another theme altogether, I finally included it for a definite reason. It has been my privilege for the past few years to conduct a discussion group, made up of teachers and college students, and I have found them continually asking for formal intellectual confirmation of Jesus' position. They wanted to be assured that Jesus does not stand alone against the intellectual currents of the centuries. He does not. The formative thinkers confirm him. The quiet men of the studies, unraveling the mysteries of experience by the light of the golden lamp of philosophy, come back with the same report as the Galilæan: he who would know life must read its meaning in the hearts of his fellows, those hearts which open only to such as approach them with sympathy and understanding.

CHAPTER I

LIGHTING THE GOLDEN LAMP

Philosophy is a fearsome word with some men. It summons to their minds a strange vocabulary of unintelligible words, a fine-spun web of bewildering reasonings, an intellectual luxuriance of foliage through which they fear they cannot hack their way with their dull-edged minds. The common man is content to leave the caviar of philosophy to mental palates more delicate than his own. When someone speaks to him of it, he looks impressed, then passes on indifferently, sure that it means nothing in particular to him.

Yet philosophers too are men. Their minds have no tricks or secrets hidden from ours. Whatever of wisdom they have gained they have won through an intellectual discipline which we may emulate, and from which we may gain results that are comparable to theirs. They have no holy of holies into which ordinary beings may not enter, if only they have patience to follow to the end. Once the lure of the trail is upon you, moreover, it is not difficult to go on, for there be few paths richer in fascination than that of the philosopher's quest.

It leads out toward those frontiers of the world which still remain unconquered. The thrill of the youth who throws his strength against insurmountable Everest, or of the scientist who probes to the level of a new fact, or of the discoverer who lifts his eyes to an uncharted mountain range, is shared by those who have the courage to follow a thinker's trail to where he left it, and then dare to push even a little further on, setting a new stake on the pathway that shall ultimately bring men to the dawn of understanding. All true philosophers belong in the noble company of the adventurers. Emancipated men they are and alluring company. No hours pass more swiftly than those we spend with the interpreters, listening to their calm voices falling amid the shadows of their studies dimly lighted by flames kindled at the wick of the golden lamp.

I

THE REASON FOR INTRODUCING PHILOSOPHY INTO THIS DISCUSSION

Some may nevertheless wonder why we inject philosophy into a discussion of Christianity, and particularly that aspect of Christianity which deals with so practical a matter as human relationships. The answer is not far to seek. We do it because we cannot help doing it, whether we call our doing it philosophy or something else. Man is not content to act without rationalizing upon his actions. He insists on explaining to himself what he is trying to do and why he is trying to do it. He demands that we shall give him a reason for the faith that is in him and an explanation of his course of conduct. Immediately we try to answer that demand we are plunged into the statement of some philosophy of life. In a world of rational beings we must find some reasonable excuse for living.

Our philosophy, however we may phrase it, is the nearest we come to an objective report on experience. It is the fruit of contemplation. It is, like poetry, the report of our tranquillity upon our emotions. Therefore it stands a better chance of being balanced and fair than our heated words that leap out of the thick of the fight.

So long as the athlete is in the midst of the game he is so busy doing the next thing that needs to be done that his perspective of the whole game is likely to be awry. In the quiet of his own room afterward, however, he is able to go over the game point by point, to reassure himself where his skill was adequate, and to correct himself where he fell short. He can think in terms of the whole game. For most of us that is a fair picture of the way in which we must get our philosophy of life. We must hammer it out in our few interludes of respite from the harassing activities that make up the daily round.

The professional philosopher, the man whom society has chosen by its own methods to interpret its life, occupies a more strategic point of vantage. He is like the expert spectator, occupying a favored place, who looks down upon a struggle without sharing in it, who understands its technique, and who analyzes it not only play by play but as a whole. If he cannot free himself from the emotions which the strife arouses, they only serve to make his eyes more keen, enabling him to bring back a full report of the strategy involved.

It is all very well to scoff at the philosophers, and to despise them as impractical men; it remains true that they are the critics at life's performance, and he is proving himself an egotistic player who scorns the critic's word. The philosopher helps us to see ourselves as others see us. His contemplative experience is as real as our more active one, and he has much to teach us of life's deeper meanings.

II

PHILOSOPHY AS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

A good deal of currency has been given lately to a saying of Professor Bowne's that "philosophy is not everybody's business." Like most epigrams, however, it is no more than a half-truth. When you subject it to critical scrutiny, you realize that the point at which it is untrue is just as important as that at which it is true.

What he meant to say is perfectly clear, and its truth is beyond debate. There is a certain kind of metaphysical reasoning which is so closely knit, so highly technical both in form and vocabulary, and so abstruse in its conclusions, that the ordinary mind is lost in its mazes, and is so unprepared to analyze it that both its approval and criticism are automatically invalid. There are tracts of philosophical reasoning which are barred to the untrained man, just as there are reaches of chemistry and physics into which the untechnical may not go. We might agree, for example, that Kant is the most important figure in modern philosophy, but none of us would think of putting his books into the hands of a beginner who had come seeking an introduction to philosophic thought. You might as well hand a Patagonian the *Republic* of Plato in the original Greek.

But that is not the whole story, for there is a sense in which philosophy is everybody's business. In fact, one of the most persistent quests of all kinds of men is after some key which will unlock the riddles of experience. You may find somewhere a race of men without bread but never one without some philosophy of life. This accounts for the extraordinary vogue attained by some mediocre books and cults. Somebody measures the chambers of the Great Pyramid; by a little arithmetical legerdemain he makes its proportions fit into an outline of human history, and immediately he finds a following among the people who have no well-defined philosophy of life and who hope that he has stumbled on a key to the meaning of events. Swedenborg and Mary Baker Eddy have this strategic advantage; they offer clear-cut interpretations of the meaning of life and of experience; consequently, the common man can rest his mind in them, for they are definite in a world where so many voices are hesitant. Fundamentalist theology has the same advantage. It knows exactly what it believes about God and his creation so that it is able to meet candidly the demands of men for a coherent universe.

These cults are not vagaries, merely, of human curiosity. They are symptoms of a genuine human need. They bring home to us the fact that men insist on coming to terms with the world in some way, that when they ask the questions which they repeat so often, "What can I believe?" "How do you interpret this?" they mean what they say, and are actually looking for light. If, therefore, they are not introduced in some popular way to the rational conclusions of the best thinkers, they will follow those who speak with certainty, whether they speak with sense or not. Fortune-tellers, swami, theosophists, and all the cults of magic and mumbo-jumbo, are symbols of wistful man trying to find some lead which will help him to explain the paradox and pain of his experience.

So far are we from agreeing that philosophy is not everybody's business that I believe it would be truer to say that every man is a philosopher. That is to say, every man has his own interpretation of the universe. Few of us are happier than when we can sit back in congenial company, and begin, "Now, this is the way I think about it." The clubman sunk in his leather cushions, the hobo warming his skinny hands at a friendly flame, the fraternity man sprawled on his cot, the woodsman squatted at the foot of a tree—all men love sometimes to talk things out, to wrestle with the facts of life until they yield some meaning.

Countee Cullen, poignant minstrel of his race's travail, has written an epitaph for a philosopher:

> "Here lies one who tried to solve
> The riddle of being and breath:
> The wee blind mole that gnaws his bones
> Tells him the answer is death."[1]

Not quite so easily, however, can you bury the philosopher. The mole cannot hope to touch him, for he is reborn with every new life that comes questioning out of the inscrutable past, to set its wondering face toward the uncertain future. Every tombstone has been an interrogation point in somebody's experience. The grave answers no questions. Men come back from looking into it still wondering. And as long as men wonder about life and death, there will be philosophy—for what is it, after all, but the answer man makes to the one riddle he cannot evade, the mystery of the life which has come to consciousness in him?

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[1] Reprinted by permission of Harper and Brothers, publishers.

III

INEVITABLE INTERPLAY OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

Religion certainly cannot be considered independently of philosophy. In the nature of things, religion evolves along three lines—those of history, ethics, and philosophy. As a part of its historical development it cherishes the stories of its outstanding personalities in some form of literature which becomes the sacred book of the devout. As an ethic it establishes standards of conduct worked out in more or less detail, and incorporated into the law to which all devotees are expected to give their allegiance. As a foundation for all its other activities, it makes certain assumptions concerning the nature of the world and its origin. These it develops into its conception of the Deity, by whatever name he may be called.

Even the simplest of simple faith is impossible without certain intellectual processes going on behind it. The very word "God" has to be defined in some way, unless it is to be meaningless. When you begin to define what you mean by your divinity you have already started on your religious philosophy.

The simple souls who ask for their gospel freed from all philosophy do not realize that their gospel is itself a philosophy. The law of Moses, for example, has no meaning if this is not a universe of law in which caprice has no place. As far back as Exodus, therefore, our religion lines up against philosophies of chance.

The conception of righteousness, on which all appeals to moral living are based, means nothing unless man is in some sense free to choose between conflicting activities. This means nothing less than that our religion works on the basis of a philosophy which is opposed to every interpretation of life that makes human activity automatic, uncontrolled by man's own will and choice. You cannot consider any of our beliefs without realizing that the implications of them run out into assumptions concerning the very nature of the universe itself.

Our thought of God as a loving heavenly Father necessarily means that we must think of the world as having a great personality back of it, and therefore careful of personal values. This implies a universe motivated by good will, governed by a supreme plan, serving a holy purpose. In the face of the pain and tragedy of the world—its ruthlessness, its strife, its disappointments—that is quite a large implication. Accepted uncritically, it may be no more than one of those thoughts which are but the expression of a wish. It is no sure anchor in uncertain days unless we can be sure that it is reasonable.

Think also of what is implied in our thought of Jesus. If all we have been taught about him be true, then God and man are so close of kin that they can meet in one personality. This means that we are no strangers in the domain of a foreign potentate, but are even now in our Father's world. Or ask yourself what kind of a universe this is which can produce a character like his. The mere fact that such a man could live at all gives us a new confidence in the forces of life that play about us. He throws a new light also on our humanity. Tell me the whole, long story of man's impiety, of brother's inhumanity to brother, of sordid crime and beastly lust, and when you have told it all, I have one fact that forbids my despair of humanity's better part. I still know that out of the loins of the race came Jesus. What manner of creature is he who can beget a Man like this? Our conception of Christ, if it is to be at all comprehensive, must lead us out into building the kind of world capable of producing him and fit to house him.

When you get over into the consideration of such themes as immortality, revelation, and salvation, you are more than ever plunged into a series of definitions that involve the character of life and its meaning. However pragmatic a theory of religion may start out to be, it must inevitably come to the place where it begins to teach. When that happens, it must organize its thought and so produce what can be called nothing less than its philosophy.

Religion is the discovery of the quality of the universe and the exploitation of that discovery. It is the interpretation of all the phenomena of experience in terms of comradeship with the Creator. Comradeship involves the total personality, it is incomplete as long as only a fraction of the person is involved in it. Consequently, the religious experience cannot be restricted to merely the emotional side of our lives. It takes the whole man to discover God. This means that the mind must be enlisted in the quest and satisfied with the result of it. It is inconceivable that an irrational religion can ever win the loyal adherence of mankind. Theology, therefore, is no interloper in the temple, forcing itself unnaturally upon the attention of the worshipers; it is a foundation stone without which the temple itself can never stand sure. Until we have thought our faith through to an intellectually sound definition, it is still insecure.

IV

THE SEARCH FOR A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

The attempt to formulate a Christian philosophy began immediately upon the departure of Jesus. Indeed, it would be quite possible to work a coherent philosophical system out of his own teachings, in spite of the fact that he never actually set himself to the task of describing the world in its totality. Every word he spoke rests upon the fundamental assumption that this is a world of law governed by the good will of the Father. He never argued about it; he lived by his belief, and was content to rest his case upon the character he achieved. He knew, as we also know, that no multiplicity of words, however skillfully chosen, could make so convincing an argument as that.

As soon as he was gone, however, the quest for an intellectual statement of his position began. It immediately intrigued Paul, who was a man of the schools, a cosmopolitan anxious to win not only the poor but also the cultured and the learned to Christ. He knew that in the world was a city called Athens, and that ultimately he would have to face the thinkers of that city with the gospel of his master. Accordingly, he began at once to work out his Christian theology. His heart must have beat fast within him on that day when he first felt the streets of Athens beneath his feet, and lifted up his eyes to the Acropolis. Only one other city could give him such a thrill, and that the city of the Cæsars itself.

From the days of the great apostle to our own the men of Athens have been standing over against the men of Calvary, demanding reasons for the faith that has been theirs, and the Pauls have been seeking to tell the story of Jesus in such language that the Athenians shall be convinced. The challenges of old philosophies and new facts have continually meant the modification and reinterpretation of Christian teaching. The religion of Jesus, which has never allowed men to forget the reality of the moral struggle, has had to be continually fighting for its own life in the warfare of ideas. In spite of the dogmatic conservatism which has characterized it in some of its conflicts, it has nevertheless given abundant proof of the genuine vitality which is in it, by its ability to respond to new facts with such keen intellectual insight as to appropriate them and actually to make them yield religious light.

In every generation Christianity has ordered its thoughts in the vocabulary and according to the mental habits of its times. There are fashions in ideas as in everything else. Certain words and concepts have an unusual vogue at different times. Consequently, Christian thinkers have had to be continually restating their positions in the terms current to their own days. The message of Christianity has not changed, but the language in which it has had to express itself has changed.

The church of the first and second centuries found itself in a world of Neoplatonism—men were returning to Plato for their interpretation of reality, consequently early Christian theology was couched in the terms of classical Greek philosophy. During the fifth and sixth centuries the dominating idea was that of man's depravity, of his utter hopelessness apart from divine grace, with the result that all the thinking of the church in those days was cast into these terms. With the completion of the organization of the hierarchy, and the extension of its power, the church became the center of Christian thought in the Middle Ages, so that naturally all its teachers exalted it as the supreme authority on earth in all matters intellectual, political, and spiritual. When the Renaissance burst into Europe, it threw into a ferment not only secular but also sacred scholarship. The Reformers spoke the language of their contemporary humanism, and even those scholars who remained within the Roman Church showed an unprecedented hospitality to novel ideas. In the great Wesleyan Revival of the eighteenth century you find its leader striking his hardest blows for the Arminian doctrine of free will—which was perfectly natural in the century of Jean Jacques Rousseau, the American War of Independence, and the French Revolution.

The intellectual restlessness of men necessitates a continual re-examination of Christian doctrines. Along with the evangelist who can arouse men must go the teacher who can instruct them. After the fathers have been converted their children must be educated. This means that the church must always be ready to present them with a faith couched in such terms that they can accept it, and find it congenial in the world in which they have to live and think. It is not the least of the glories of Christianity that its intellectual resiliency has given continual proof of its being genuinely alive.

We can no more than trace the general trends of thought in the unfolding philosophies of the Christian centuries. But even that will be important as showing us the tendencies which affect men's thinking as a result of the Christian view of life. When we were studying the pragmatic history of Christianity we saw that it can be understood only as we see in it a great ethical impulse purging human events. It will confirm our opinion that the religion of Jesus is primarily an ethical religion if we can see that the same tendency in its thinkers insists on an intellectual interpretation of the universe which exalts human values above all others.

In spite of the periods of ecclesiastical stagnation which have afflicted Christian history, the main course of the world's thought, since Jesus gave it the new impulse of his own fine thinking, has been in the direction of exalting human well-being. The Christian thinker has been moved by the same passion as the reformer. Not only the most glorious activity of Christian story, but the most enlightened thinking also, has found its source in genuine ethical feeling. The Christian philosophers have consistently been the advocates of personality in the midst of a seemingly impersonal world.

CHAPTER II

IN THE GARDENS OF PLATO

THE thinking of Christianity has been so largely influenced by the ideal of one whom, in our simple way, we are pleased to call a heathen philosopher, that we do well to begin our exploration of Christian thinking with Plato. His ideals early came to have large influence on the interpreters of the religion of Jesus, and that influence has persisted down to the present day. Even through all the disturbances of ecclesiastical divisions the Platonic tradition in all branches of Christianity has continued evenly on its way.

I

THE GREAT REVIVAL BEFORE CHRIST

The thousand years preceding the Christian era saw a new and higher estimate put by man upon himself as one result of a spiritual renaissance that affected not one or two races merely, but all the civilized peoples of the earth. Asia was first stirred by it, Palestine felt it in the eighth and seventh centuries B. C., and Greece was aroused by it in the sixth and fifth centuries. It came as a protest against the outworn nature-religions upon which the primitive cultures of Egypt, Babylonia, and India had been built. It was both an intellectual and a social revolution. Man, conscious of new powers stirring within him, stood up to shake himself free from the outworn concepts of his uncritical infancy.

Dominating this crisis in development was the idea of an unseen world of unchanging reality, which lies behind the change and decay that are apparent in the world of common experience. Its exponents taught men of a spiritual universe which is the true universe, and compared with which the world of the things that are seen becomes pale and unsubstantial, merely a temporary symbol of the eternal reality which lies beneath. The very essence of this widespread and profoundly influential reformation in the millennium before Christ was its insistence on the eternal nature of spiritual values, and the ephemeral nature of things material. It exalted man above all things because in him resides that spiritual essence which is the eternal reality that gives the world its meaning.

Out of this new interpretation of life came the definition of salvation as victory over the tyranny of temporal affairs resulting in the discovery of eternal peace. In Buddhism, which has carried this conception to its ascetic conclusion, salvation actually means the extinction of all desire, the complete submersion of personality in the Eternal Self, which is without appetite or temporal consciousness. Most of the characteristic forms of Oriental pantheism and doctrines of transmigration of souls also find their origins in this ancient philosophy of the spirit.

Plato stands as the man who interpreted this ideal of an unseen and eternal world to Europe. He taught that behind all that fills our eyes is a pure Beauty, unsullied by any material stains. If, for a single fleeting moment, a man's gaze should catch the glory of it, then, eager as a lover going to meet his beloved, he would forget all else and pursue it. His summons to men to look beneath the dross of the tangible, to seek after the eternally unchanging and eternally beautiful, to lay hold upon reality and find it lovely, has never quite died out of the ears of the Western world. Harassed, disappointed, broken, disillusioned, men have never been able entirely to turn their wistful hearts away from the haunting voice of the man who told them that the things that are tangible are deceptions, but the things that are unseen are real.

Here, then, five hundred years before Jesus was born appeared a spiritual philosophy which had its own development and history in the Greek and Roman worlds. When we take stock of the world-movements which prepared the way for the coming of Christianity, this one must rank high. Not only was Jesus the product of the race which had attained the noblest religious genius in the history of the races, but he was also the consummation of an age which broke through the shell of appearance to discover the genuine breathing life that lay within. He gathered up into himself the tides of the spirit that had been running strongly in all the currents of men's thinking for a thousand years, through the most profoundly influential revival of spiritual idealism that the world has ever seen. So much kinship is there between the Christian and Platonic ideas that it was inevitable that the one should be continually affected by the other. It is therefore not surprising that, although the teachings of the Master himself go back for their inspiration to the Hebrew prophets, the earliest Christian literature subsequent to him is full of reasoning and reference that echo the tradition of Plato.

II

Platonic Influence in the New Testament

It is always easy for men who are maintaining a thesis to exaggerate the importance of what they are expounding. For example, many scholars who have painstakingly worked out the influence of Greek thought on the writers of the New Testament have allowed themselves the luxury of hyperbole in summing up their case. One writer has said, "Christianity, though Jewish in form, is Hellenic at bottom." Another has gone still further, giving as his opinion, "Christianity is a Græco-Roman phenomenon in a Jewish mask." Such assertions cannot be maintained in the face of the consistent Hebrew tradition in Christian thought, and the authoritative place which has always been occupied by the Hebrew Scripture. They do serve to remind us, however, that primitive Christianity moved out into a world thinking in the terms of the Greek and Roman philosophers, and was profoundly influenced by that world.

Paul was certainly acutely conscious of the same distinction between the material and the spiritual which lay at the heart of Plato's thinking. The great Athenian himself could not have summed up his fundamental position more succinctly than did the apostle in the familiar words, "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." In fact, Paul's whole teaching concerning the Spirit is so reminiscent of Plato's concerning what he is pleased to call the "Mind" that it is almost impossible to believe that it could have been developed independently of it.

Many parallels have been drawn between the works of these two men. We have space for but one or two, but they will serve as suggestions of the dependence of the later writer upon the earlier. Plato is fond of the words, "fellowship," "participation," and "presence"; any student of Paul will immediately recognize these as characteristic words of his. Such a sentence as this from Plato, "There is an immortal conflict going on among us, in which the gods and the angels are our allies," is almost like an echo from some of the great words of Paul, except that the apostle would never have spoken of gods, but only of God. The psychology which divides man into body, mind, and spirit belongs to both alike.

Perhaps the most striking of all the resemblances between the Athenian and the apostle is that between Plato's *Phædrus* and Paul's hymn to love in his first letter to the Corinthians. In both of them love is the supreme experience and the only adequate approach of man to God. It is the name they both give to that communion of the soul of man with the

Eternal which is the consummation of the ideal of fellowship. The Christian preacher gave to love a nobler connotation than the philosopher, who had never known Jesus, but the kinship of spirit between them is so unmistakable that none of us should be unwilling to accept Emerson's dictum on Plato's work, "Christianity is in it. . . . Mysticism finds in Plato all its texts."

The writings of John also manifest a decided Platonic influence, which comes, however, not directly from Greece, but by way of Alexandria, where lived in the first century a Jew named Philo. A contemporary of Jesus and Paul, this Alexandrian apparently knew neither one of them, but gave himself up to finding the common ground between the religion of the Hebrews and the philosophy of the Greeks. He produced a system which was a sort of Platonized Judaism. While the system itself did not have much vogue, his methods and vocabulary proved useful to many early Christian thinkers. The peculiar phraseology of the opening verses of the Gospel of John is that of Philo. This is no place to enter into a discussion of the doctrine of the "Logos," translated "Word" in our Testaments. All we are interested in noticing here is that the very use of the word at all denotes that the early Christians were thinking in Platonic terms.

When we think of the humble intellectual beginnings of Christianity, and the provincial men who were its first exponents, we stand amazed at their intellectual achievement in producing the New Testament. While it is primarily a result of the stimulus of the life and character of Jesus, we have to recognize also that the immense influence of Plato is in it. It would have been a different book in its phraseology and in its emphases had the great Athenian never taught in the groves of Academe. The first Christian missionaries found the world more hospitable to their message because it had learned from Plato to think in terms of the eternal reality of the spirit of man.

III

The Neoplatonic Movement

During the third century the intellectual center of the world shifted to Alexandria, where scholars who were not satisfied with any of the ancient philosophies in their original form tried to combine into new systems the best of all the elements they had found in the old. The most influential doctrine which they evolved was Neoplatonism, which passed by way of Augustine into Christian theology, and which has never ceased to exert a formative influence on Christian thought. It has kept the Greek mystical tradition alive all through the Christian years.

The great man of this school was Plotinus. He based his system on Platonism, borrowed largely from the work of Philo and his successors, and produced a system which has been the source and root of most of the philosophical mysticism which has come since. It is particularly interesting to us because so much of its phraseology has entered into our familiar religious speech.

The principal aim of the Neoplatonists was to give expression to the conception of that supreme unity which is the source of all existences and of all knowledge. They tried to show the spiritual unity of the universe so convincingly as to make the way to God clear. In Plato the supreme factor in the universe was the Idea of the good, an idea that we might hope to grasp in our own thinking. In Plotinus, however, the ultimate unity is raised beyond the level of ideas, so that man can never hope to understand it with his intellect alone, no matter how profound he may become. If he is to rise to the apprehension of God at all, it must be through an intuition which transcends knowledge—a state of ecstasy in which the individual is absorbed into the Divine Being.

God, as Plotinus defined him, is all-perfect, pure creative acitivity, the first cause of the universe and its final goal. He pours out his life along three levels, the first higher than the second, and the second higher than the third. The first level is that of the intelligence, in which are to be discovered the causes of all things. Then comes the World-Soul which distributes itself into individual souls. Farthest removed from God is Matter, which is the negation of being, and, hence, is evil. For this reason we must eschew the world of sense as irrational and false.

When individuals descend from the level of the World-Soul into matter, they forget their divine origin, the light that is in them is dimmed, and, if they tarry, may go out altogether. The task of the teacher, therefore, is to turn the feet of men away from things sensual to things spiritual. The individual is playing with shadows until his eyes are opened to reverence the glories of the spirit. So much did Plotinus despise the things of the flesh that he urged men to regard their bodies as garments which hindered their progress and, at the same time, defiled them.

He asserted that there were various stages of progress in spiritual insight. The mass of men, he thought, could never rise above the senses. Some could rise to the level of the virtues of the practical life. A relatively small group might hope to know the joys of the contemplative life, in which the Intelligence is supreme. Finally, a select few might attain to that stage of ecstasy when the soul forgets self and mounts to blessed union with God, wherein it enters into complete knowledge, and all doubt and thralldom disappear. We are told that Plotinus himself attained to this Beatific Vision four times.

Neoplatonism, as such, does not mean much to the twentieth century, but its interpretation of the spiritual experience persists as the one which is more generally accepted by the rank and file of Christian people than any other. Certainly, when an evangelical Christian speaks of someone as being "spiritual" he means precisely what Plotinus would have meant by that term. The words of Plato transmitted through the Neoplatonic movement have become the colloquial speech of the prayer meeting. No distinction appears more valid to the average person of piety than that between the spiritual and the carnal. Though the pietists call Plato a pagan, they are his disciples at this point.

IV

Plato and the Renaissance

For practically a thousand years Europe forgot Plato and all his works. Men were held cheap and the lamp of culture burned low. In accordance with that fashion of our day which revises the reputations of great men downward and those of bad men upward some historians are trying desperately to retrieve the reputation of the Dark Ages. But they are meeting with little success, for, in spite of an occasional luminary, the night of mediæval Europe was dark indeed before the dawn of the Renaissance.

The heralds of the new day carried the recovered remains of the classics in their hands. Erasmus and his fellow humanists aroused a sleeping world with the music of classical eloquence. They breathed into the dry bones of dogmatic intolerance the sweet breath of Greek wisdom. It is true that their kind of reform could never have supplied an adequate foundation for a new civilization, that sterner men than More and Colet were needed to break the shackles of the Middle Ages from the wrists and ankles of northern Europe, yet it cannot be denied that the rougher men, Luther and Calvin, walked more surely and builded more quickly because the lamp of the new learning was lifted upon their paths.

The revived appreciation of classic culture produced a passionate enthusiasm for freedom, and a new spontaneity that expressed itself in original thinking, an enlarged range of human interests, and an exaltation of human values. The empire of the church, which had exercised its tyranny not only over the bodies and souls of men but over their minds also, was broken. As a result superstition gave way to science, the hierarchy was made subordinate to secular power, the mournful episode of priestly tyranny, opposed to both the spirit of Greece and the principles of the gospel, was ended, and, as a result, both had a new chance to mold the world by their persuasions.

It is illuminating to contrast the effects of the new learning within the Roman Church and outside of it. In Italy the Renaissance did little toward reforming the church. The Popes of the period encouraged the classical aspects of the new day only to turn its glories into added splendor for their own courts. Morally, they were unaffected, for some of the most degraded incidents of papal history belong to this very period. The Vatican was living by the dictum that Christianity was the most profitable of all human superstitions.

The men of the north were affected quite differently, however. The new learning meant to them not only new delight but also a new critique for all of life. It was not divorced from or hostile to Christianity but was enlisted in the service of true religion. Men like the scholarly Melanchthon found in it new tools for biblical research; others, like the flaming Zwingli, used its new inspirations for more eloquent biblical exposition. Thoroughly steeped in the poised spirit of the ancient philosophers, the calmer men of the Renaissance were able to save their more emotional comrades of the Reformation from their own excesses, and to suggest the sane road which the church might follow to its own purging. Plato alone could not have given us the world which came out of the Revival of Learning, but I think justice insists that we add, the modern world would not have been able to assimilate its new facts or to produce the scientific spirit so rapidly, had not the voice of Greek wisdom spoken at the crucial time.

This same influence wove itself into the religious interpretations that came out of the Reformation. Neither Luther nor Calvin can be called a Platonist in any strict sense of the word, yet the fact remains that the reformers were influenced immensely by the new humanism of the Renaissance. It was so much in the air as to be inescapable.

For sheer intellectual power there have been few works to compare with Calvin's *Institutes*, the treatise written before he was thirty, in which he expounded with unerring reasoning the theology which is associated with his name. It is a prodigious effort which stamps him as one of the most painstaking, original, and logical minds of history. It is easily the most comprehensive statement which has come from any of the reformers. Yet even this precocious work gives abundant evidence of Platonic influence. The whole doctrine of God, for example, carries the classical connotation. His assertion of the right of private judgment, his call for absorption in the divine will, also follow the Platonic tradition.

More striking, however, than the formal treatises on doctrine was the whole new impetus which the Reformation gave to personal piety. The devotional life of countless people took on a new vitality. Pietism and mysticism have always gone hand in hand, and some form of Platonism has always been the philosophical refuge of the mystics. So that, even if they were not drawn to Plato by sheer force of his intellectual gravity, the Reformers were compelled to give him recognition by the practical exigencies of the experiences which they themselves helped to create.

Plato dominated the Renaissance. While it cannot be said that he dominated the Reformation, it can be said that the result of the Protestant revolt was to strengthen the Platonic tradition in Christian thought, and that the influence of Plato held the Reformation to more humanistic levels than otherwise it would have attained.

V

The Mystics

Mysticism is that type of religion which is rooted in an immediate experience of God, a direct and intimate consciousness of divine communion. While it has flourished within the church, it is still true that churchmen have always been a little uneasy about it, for it naturally minimizes the importance of ecclesiasticism, ritualism, priestcraft, and all tendencies toward formalism. It insists that nothing matters as much as the direct witness of the Spirit in the soul of man. It is religion as a personal, eager, private, and intense experience.

The most impressive emergence of historical mysticism was so closely bound up with the Neoplatonist movement that we cannot separate the two. In addition to Plotinus, himself a great mystic, we have associated with this movement two men whose work justifies a more intimate look at them. Meister Eckhart lived in the thirteenth century, when Neoplatonism had a certain measure of revival. He taught that the real in all things is the divine, and that man should lay everything aside to enter into the full privilege of union with God. Churchly observances, he believed, may be of some value, but the springs of the mystic life are deeper and its union with God is more direct. He was under trial for heresy when he died, and after his death certain of his teachings were condemned by the church. In spite, however, of official disapproval, his teachings took root, and the influential German mystical movement, not the least of the preparations for the Reformation, grew out of them.

From the fourteenth century there speaks to us the voice of one thoroughly Catholic by training and disposition, Thomas à Kempis, whose little manual of devotion, *The Imitation of Christ*, has undoubtedly been the most widely distributed and influential book produced by the Middle Ages. It speaks in the simple, mystical language of personal devotion to Christ. To a greater degree than any of the more formal treatises it has kept alive the mystical and Platonic spirit of Christianity.

The Counter-Reformation produced within the Roman fold a new group of mystics whose extreme devotion expressed itself in the most rigorous asceticism. Seeking, as have all mystics, after the attainment of that complete knowledge which can come alone through self-surrender to the Eternal, they aimed at the complete crucifixion of self, the utter annihilation of self-will, and the achievement of complete absorption in God. Saint Teresa and Saint Francis de Sales are the greatest names among them. Their influence has been extensive in the more extreme schools of Quietism, throughout all branches of the Christian Church.

Protestant mysticism has flourished largely upon the teachings of the fourth Gospel which, as we have seen, was itself profoundly influenced by Platonic thought. Although the direct influence of the school of Plotinus has been meager in the Protestant churches, yet the Quietism which they have fostered has come of its own accord to occupy the same view of the world which the Neoplatonists held. Such men as Jacob Boehme, George Fox, and William Law proceed definitely on the assumption that the world of appearance is only symbolic of the world of spiritual reality which lies back of it, and so they seek definitely to establish some technique of devotion which will enable them to pierce through the world of sense to the knowledge of the eternal world of spiritual values. Independently of church and tradition they point men the mystical way to God.

Our own century has seen a revival of mysticism, partly as a result of intellectual weariness and partly as a seeking after a sure and steadfast experience in the midst of a kaleidoscopic age. The most brilliant exponent of the Platonic tradition among our contemporaries is Dean Inge of Saint Paul's, in London. He is avowedly a disciple of Plotinus, and brings to our whole civilization a classical critique. We can do no better than to allow him to sum up what he considers to have been the contribution of classical Greek philosophy to Christian thought:

"My contention is that besides the combative Catholic and Protestant elements in the churches, there has always been a third element with very honorable traditions, which came to life at the Renaissance, but really reaches back to the Greek Fathers, to Saint Paul and Saint John, and further back still. The characteristics of this type of Christianity are: a spiritual religion based on a firm belief in absolute and eternal values as the most real things in the universe; a confidence that these values are knowable by man; a belief that they can nevertheless be known only by whole-hearted consecration of the intellect, will, and affections to the great quest; an entirely open mind to the discoveries of science; a reverent and receptive attitude to the beauty, sublimity, and wisdom of the creation, as a revelation of the mind and character of the Creator; a complete indifference to the current valuations of the worldling."[1]

VI

Plato and Christ

From even so swift a survey as we have made above, the reality of the Platonic influence in Christian thought must be clear. An interpretation of life which captured the thinking of the writers of the New Testament, and can command as trenchant a pen as that of the present dean of Saint Paul's in our contemporary life, gives proof of its own vitality. Platonism is not the whole of Christianity, of course. Nor has Christianity appropriated the whole of Platonism. It has made its own selection from among the teachings of Plato. The selected teachings are interesting because of the light which they throw upon the kind of ideas which have been able to survive through the centuries since Jesus came.

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[1] *The Platonic Tradition in English Thought.* Reprinted by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., publishers.

Pure Platonism has always had an aristocratic strain in it, emphasizing the difference between men, exalting some and submerging others. Plato's ideal for a republic was an aristocratically governed state, with sharp distinctions of privilege matching differences of gifts. This same strain found its way into Plotinus with his gradations of possible spiritual attainments that shut the majority of men out of the hope of any beatific vision. It is certainly present in the thought of Dean Inge, most of whose gloominess arises from the fact that he is an aristocrat in the midst of a democratic society. His is the pessimism of an anachronism. True to Plato, he has no great faith in the common run of men.

At this point the Athenian was in sharp conflict with the Nazarene. It is striking, therefore, to realize that with all his immense influence Plato has not been able to fasten his aristocratic thinking upon Christianity. That emphasis of his can never be acclimated to the Christian atmosphere.

On its other side, however, Platonism has been an effective protest against tyranny and institutionalism. It has asserted the power and privilege of the individual to overleap all authority and come to a direct knowledge of the deepest truth by and for himself. Humanism and the prerogatives of personality have been genuinely exalted in its hands. Christianity has seized upon this aspect of it. Jesus and Plato have met in their common emphasis on the supreme value of the individual soul, and in their exaltation of spiritual values. The inner light which Plato described, Christianity has made identical with the indwelling Spirit of the living and glorious Christ.

Out of the many implications of Plato's thinking the followers of Jesus have naturally selected this one because the very nature of our faith is ethical. In Christian hands the Platonic tradition has served human values in a way that it never could have done without them. Despite the emotional excesses of the mystics, and in spite of their too great absorption at times in the contemplation of the other world, it still remains true that mysticism as a whole has been an effective protest against the subordination of individuals to institutions. With all its vagaries, Christian Platonism has survived, because it has championed individuality and exalted those values which most enrich human experience. It has been on the side of the more abundant life. By the glow of their golden lamp Christian Platonists have defined for us the priceless value of the eternal spirit of man. Their interpretation of life survives because their primary emphasis on the superlative value of man is true.

CHAPTER III

IN THE PORCH OF SAINT PETER'S

THE differences between the Protestant and Roman branches of the Christian Church have been so aggravated by historical conflicts and inflamed by mutual intolerances that it has become almost impossible for the normally trained Protestant to approach the consideration of Roman Catholicism with any sympathy whatsoever. He sees the huge bulk of its organization, he is acutely conscious of its abuses of power, and it looks to him like a mountain of hypocrisy. He simply cannot understand how intelligent people can be at home in it, nor why any one should be willing to surrender himself as completely to any ecclesiasticism as the devoted Catholic does to his. He regards it as a sort of monstrous graft.

Such a view obviously oversimplifies the problem. You cannot explain away two thousand years of vitality in terms of the extraordinary cunning of venal men. For centuries the Church of Rome dominated Europe altogether, and even in our modern world it possesses an almost incredible vitality. In the midst of a generation of falling thrones the autocracy of the Pope has been re-enforced; five hundred years after the collapse of feudalism this most feudalistic of organizations flourishes; at the close of the greatest of wars fought in the name of freedom it is plain that this most tyrannical of churches has gained more than any others from the conflict. There are tides of life in such an organization as this which run deeper than our intolerances dare admit. Such persistency can be only that of life itself.

We cannot make an exhaustive study of Roman Catholicism here, but we can take time to realize what are some of the sources of its genuine strength, the terms in which it does its thinking, the results which it produces in the lives of its adherents, and also the perils inherent in its life.

From among the many extraordinary minds that have worked out its intellectual position to the minutest detail, we will choose two who stand out as so characteristic that we can get to the heart of Rome's philosophy by considering them. They are Saint Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Many other names come crowding in alongside theirs, but it is probably fair to say that they sum up the thinking of the church as do no other two men of its history.

I

SAINT AUGUSTINE

Augustine stands with Ambrose the militant bishop of Milan, Jerome the translator of the Vulgate, and Gregory the Great Pope, as one of the four doctors of the Roman Church. In his influence upon the subsequent thinking of Christianity he outranks them all. If Western Christianity has any superiority over Eastern, it is primarily because of his heritage. Like Paul, he grounded his theology so definitely in his own experience that the most enlightening commentary on his thinking is his life.

He was born in Africa, and came to the battle of life with a sharply divided temperament. On the one side he was passionate and sensual, on the other high-minded and eager in pursuit of truth. When he was seventeen and studying rhetoric at Carthage he took to himself a concubine, with whom he lived for fourteen years, and by whom he became the father of a son, Adeodatus, whom he never ceased to love dearly. At nineteen he was stabbed awake intellectually by the reading of Cicero's *Hortensius*. Immediately he plunged into the study of various systems of thought, giving his allegiance at last to a sect called the Manicheans, who taught that there is an eternal warfare between light and darkness, and that man can attain the light only through the most rigorous asceticism. Augustine reached the place where he was able to pray, "Grant me chastity and continence, but not yet."

He remained a Manichean for nine years, during which time he continued to study, and one year was crowned at Carthage for a theatrical poem. Before the close of this period he was already beginning to doubt the intellectual adequacy of his philosophy. Accordingly, when he received an appointment to teach in Milan, he welcomed it for the opportunity it would give him to hear Ambrose, whose reputation for eloquence and learning was widespread. In Milan, nevertheless, his moral life sank to its lowest level when he dismissed his concubine and entered into even worse relationships. Some Neoplatonic writings fell into his hands, and he began to lay hold on the truth that the world of spiritual values is the only true world. Conscious now of the gap between his ideals and his conduct, he picked up a copy of the Epistles and read: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." Then and there he felt himself released from the power of sin and entered into the Christian life. After passing through the various stages of preparation he became bishop-coadjutor in Hippo, and later assumed the full episcopal office.

His writings cover a full consideration of the church, its offices and its authority. His first thought of God was of one in whose comradeship man finds his highest happiness. He laid strong emphasis on the divine unity, even when treating of the Trinity, and here his position has been accepted as definitive by the Church of Rome. Acutely conscious of the humanity of Jesus, he never allowed it to be overshadowed by the conception of his divinity, "Christ Jesus, the Son of God, is both God and man; God before all worlds; man in our world." The crucifixion he interpreted in different ways: sometimes as a sacrifice to God; sometimes as an assumption of our suffering; sometimes as a ransom by which men are bought from the power of evil.

Man was created, so Augustine taught, to enjoy happiness in perfect communion with God, but fell from that high estate, and forfeited God's grace, through Adam's sin, the source of which was pride. The result is that the whole mass of humanity, even to the youngest, is corrupt, and there is no hope for any one of us save in the grace of the Redeemer. Salvation comes by God's grace and is wholly unearned—a free gift out and out. When that grace reaches us, however, it not only saves us from the past, but it gradually transforms us until we become sanctified.

The only channel through which the divine grace may be communicated to men is the church. The charity which covers a multitude of sins is the especial gift of the Catholic Church. Sacraments are the work of God, and not of men, so that they are not affected in their adequacy by the character of the man who administers them. The sacraments are true and valid only in the Catholic Church. While others may use them, they have no power to bring them to full fruition. Moreover, the sacraments are necessary to salvation. Augustine may justly be called the father of the doctrine of the sacraments which has played so important a rôle in the development of Catholicism.

He is a strangely divided genius, a tremendous individual enlisted with all his heart in the service of the church. From him ecclesiasticism has drawn its greatest arguments. Yet in him was so vivid a religious experience that he has never ceased to be an inspiration and guide to the profoundest kind of personal piety. We cannot hope to understand the grip of the Catholic Church on its members until we have taken the trouble to become acquainted with his doctrine of original sin, of the one true church, and of the efficacy of the sacraments. Some of his other teachings prepared the way for the Reformation, but these three became the pillars on which the edifice of Roman Catholic dogma was to rest. They constitute the essence of Rome's doctrine.

II

Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas lived eight hundred years after Augustine, the latter dying at the age of seventy-five years in 430 A. D. and the former at forty-nine years of age in the year 1274 A. D. Aquinas is not as vivid a personality as his great predecessor, but looms up rather as the supreme representative of the scholastic who brought Roman Catholic theology to its most completely articulated statement.

Born of an aristocratic family connected with the imperial house of Hohenstaufen, Thomas entered the Dominican order against the wishes of his parents and the active opposition of his brothers. After studying for some years under the most celebrated Dominican of his day, Albertus Magnus, he entered upon a teaching career which carried him from Paris to Italy and Naples. Out of his work in the classroom he developed his theology which he formulated in his great work, the *Summa Theologiæ*, a book marked by clarity, logical consistency, and intellectual breadth, unexcelled by any product of the Middle Ages. It is the high mark of scholasticism, and by declaration of Pope Leo XIII in 1879 it was made the basis of all theological instruction in the schools of the Roman Church.

His discussion of God and of the Trinity follows much the same line as that of Augustine. God's providence extends to all events, and is manifest in the predestination of some to eternal life and in leaving others to the consequences of sin in eternal condemnation. God allows sin to exist because it makes possible the higher good of all; that is to say, its existence permits the development of many virtues which strengthen the characters of those who resist it.

Accepting Augustine's doctrine of the fall of man, Aquinas asserted that, in spite of it, man in his own strength can attain to the four natural virtues of prudence, justice, courage, and self-control, but these are not sufficient to enable him to regain the vision of God. That happy experience can come only through the free and unmerited grace of God, by which man's nature is changed, his sins forgiven, and power to practice the three Christian virtues of faith, hope, and love is attained. The life and death of Christ was the wisest and most efficient method God could devise for man's redemption which is absolutely dependent upon it. For his virtue Christ deserved a reward, but as God he needed nothing, therefore his reward counts to the advantage of those who love him.

Once redeemed, man becomes capable of doing works which deserve reward. He can do not only what is expected of him, but more. These extra good works are called works of supererogation, and they add to the treasury of the overflowing merits of Christ and his saints.

Grace does not come to men indiscriminately, but through definite channels. These are the sacraments and the sacraments alone. They are baptism, confirmation, the Lord's Supper, penance, extreme unction, ordination, and matrimony. In the Lord's Supper, at the words of consecration by the priest, a miracle is wrought upon the elements by the power of God, so that while the "accidents" (shape, taste, etc.) remain the same, the "Substance" is transformed into the very body and blood of Christ. This sacrament has remained very precious to the faithful, for in it is repeated the whole mystery of the incarnation and drama of the Passion of our Lord. It is a sacrifice well pleasing in the sight of God.

The church is one, whether in earth, or heaven, or purgatory. Christ is its Head. But the visible church needs a visible head, who is the Roman Pontiff, and to be subject to him is necessary for salvation. He alone can issue new definitions of faith; all who try to do so apart from him are heretics. Here Aquinas paved the way for the dogma of papal infallibility.

Such in brief was the system of the "Angelic Doctor." It captured the imagination of Dante, whose work moves wholly in its terms. More important still, it became the intellectual framework on which has been builded that branch of the Christian Church which commands more followers than any other in the Western World.

III

Roman Catholic Piety

Obviously, a religion conceived in such terms can be nothing but a religion of authority; and if Christianity be a religion of authority, then no finer statement of its claim has ever been made than this. In fact, all efforts to substitute some other authority in place of the church have failed. When we try to make the Bible our last court of appeal, we are driven to the realization that its canon was fixed by the church and never existed independently of it. This is just as true of the New Testament as of the Old, so that we cannot take refuge in any fragment of the Scriptures without being logically forced to recognize the dependence of our authority upon the church. If any man is convinced that Christianity is a religion of authority, he can find no logical resting place outside the Roman Catholic communion.

By a religion of authority I mean one which finds the seat of authority in tradition or scripture, accepted as supernaturally imparted and embodied in some institution or book—as opposed to one that finds it in the immediate experience of believers. The Roman Church is the apotheosis of institutionalism. Never has there been such a thoroughly integrated organization with so logically unassailable a system of doctrine as this one built in the name of Jesus. Our Protestant distrust of Romanism is a result of our inbred suspicion of ecclesiasticism, a suspicion which history shows to be thoroughly well founded. Nevertheless, it has had a tendency to blind us to the genuine piety which exists within Catholicism, a piety as truly its own as the sacraments themselves.

It is a piety grounded in unquestioning faith. There is a certain type of man who cannot be at rest until he has found some authority that silences his rebellious spirit and grants him peace; he is ill at ease so long as he cannot be sure; everywhere he seeks for an unwavering voice that will relieve him from the plague of his own unanswered questions. Such a man, for example, was John Henry Newman. He desired peace above all things, peace of mind and peace of soul; the consummation of religion for him was in the peace which passeth all understanding. Along with that craving, however, he had a first-class mind. Consequently, when he went out to seek for the authority in which he could find tranquillity he was thoroughly logical in his quest, finally leaving the church of his youth to join the ranks of the Roman Church. Accepting the dogma of the church's authority, he sought peace in its practices.

Whether he found the inner quiet that he sought we do not know, but of the deep piety to which he attained there can be no doubt. In it there was patience and gentleness. Resignation tempered his passions with fine control; he learned to suffer misrepresentation without malice or hope of revenge, and the flame of his pure inner life illuminated his face with a hallowed glow. At the High Altar this mystic soul looked into the bright face of Christ. He belonged in the holy fellowship of those who have found in the rich imagery of the Roman Catholic Church their gateway to the vision of God. Beside him march such men as Francis of Assisi, Brother Lawrence, Francis of Sales, Cardinal Mercier; these are men who remind us of the other side of Catholicism which we all too easily forget.

Their kind of piety is genuinely present in the rank and file of the church, and constitutes its real strength. Many lofty souls there be who find their inmost hearts purged and strengthened through the symbolism of Catholic worship. Not so long ago a gentle woman was introduced to me who told me in the course of the conversation that she had two boys in the priesthood of her church. I said, "You must be very proud of them." With a quick and beautiful glance into my face, she replied, "Not proud, but thankful." She spoke far more deeply than had I. Somewhere in her worship she had been led into the secret presence of the Most High.

The machinations of Popes turned Emperors, the orgies of Italian gourmands wearing red hats, the insufferable pretense of Irish politicians turned priests, the sordid tales of American municipal politics, must not be allowed to blind us to the fact that there are thousands of devoted priests all over the world who are asking nothing of life save a chance to serve their fellows, and that these men are the real backbone of the church itself. The worst pages of her history are those filled with the stories of her neglect of common men in her anxiety to exalt the institution, her noblest are those which tell of self-sacrificing men and women of genuine piety giving themselves to alleviate human suffering in the name of Christ.

IV

Catholicism in the Modern World

On the whole, however, we have to say that the Roman hierarchy continues the tradition of the Pharisees and the legalists rather than that of the prophets and the Platonists. It stands definitely for religion as an institution rather than as an ethical crusade. Magic and formalism are its characteristic refuges.

While it has done and still does a tremendous amount of charitable work, its philanthropy is paternalistic rather than dynamic; that is to say, it is temporary relief rather than genuine reconstruction. In spite of voices like that of Father John A. Ryan, the hierarchy is conservative, not liberal. It cannot be counted among the reliable humanistic influences of our world.

In its dealings with its own devotees it makes its appeal to fear. So implicit is the faith of the average Catholic in his church that he has no doubt that its priesthood has power to forgive sins, and that unless he receives that forgiveness he is in danger of eternal damnation. He is loyal, therefore, because he is afraid of the consequences of disloyalty. It is obviously inhumane, in the highest sense of the word, to sway men by their fears.

We must also count Romanism as being obscurantist in the field of scientific knowledge. It does not approach the adventure of understanding our universe with an open mind, but interprets all knowledge in terms of its own dogmas. If there is any doubt of this intellectual conservatism of the hierarchy in our minds, we may remind ourselves of the intellectual twilight into which those lands where Catholicism has been dominant are plunged. In the realm of the mind the papacy is traditionally fearful of new ideas.

The religious conflict which will be fought out in this century will not be between Modernism and Fundamentalism, as such, but between religion as magic and religion as moral passion. Institutionalism and humanism are fighting for the crown. In that conflict there can be no doubt that all the prestige and resources of the Roman Catholic Church will be thrown on the conservative side. So wedded is the whole system to the past that it is afraid that it is guilty of inconstancy when it is tempted to turn its eyes with affection upon either the present or the future. I have introduced it here, partly because it is inescapable in such a discussion, and partly because it is the perfect development of Christianity in the opposite direction from the ethical. In spite of the lovely piety it inspires, it falls short of genuine social passion. Teaching that the end of human living is to exalt the church, it is the tragic reminder of what may happen to even the religion of Jesus when it degenerates into institutionalism.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE HOUSE OF KANT

For a thousand years all Europe was thinking in terms of the philosophy of the church; there were no secular philosophers and no rival philosophies. Sometimes great debates would consume the energies of the thinkers, as in the controversy between Augustine and the Pelagians, or that in which Duns Scotus challenged the system of Aquinas, but even these disputes were rather within the system than attacks upon it. Naturally, therefore, when men began, following the Renaissance and Reformation, to reconstruct their thinking of the universe from the foundations up, it threw the Western world into an unprecedented intellectual ferment. At first, philosophy continued as the servant of theology, but in the seventeenth century it cast loose from all religious considerations, as such, and launched itself upon an independent career which made it, in the first flush of this new reaction, actually the enemy of theology.

These were the days of the rationalists. They included the malicious Voltaire and the Encyclopedists preparing the way for Rousseau in France, Hobbes and Locke in England, Leibnitz and Wolff in Germany. Descartes also belongs with them and is the earlier of the two rationalists who have had the greatest influence upon subsequent philosophy. We will not describe his system, but will pause long enough to mention his method, because it summarizes the procedure of all rationalism. He had four maxims by which he thought; they were: first, never to accept anything for true which he did not clearly know to be such; second, to divide every difficulty under examination into as many parts as possible, and as many as might be necessary for its adequate solution; third, to conduct his thoughts in such order that, beginning with objects simple to know, he might ascend step by step to knowledge of the more complex; fourth, to make enumerations so complete that he might know that nothing was omitted. He doubted everything he could possibly doubt, but found that he could not doubt his own existence, for, even if he doubted, it was still himself doubting. Therefore he began his whole thought with the one certainty—"I think, therefore I am." The other most influential rationalist was Spinoza, whose gentleness of character and strength of intellect combine still to cast a spell over all who feel their power. If ever a man lived with a consuming passion for truth it was he.

It is a little difficult to epitomize that which is held in common by these men, among whom there are so many contrasts. However, we may say unequivocally that they were one in their vigorous repudiation of all institutional authority. They had confidence in human reason and faith in the will of man. Any form of scholasticism they distrusted, giving their enthusiasm rather to the simple, the natural, the intelligible, and the practical. They mark the break of the modern world with the kind of ecclesiasticism that was dominant in the Middle Ages.

Their teaching, however, denoted an extreme swing of the pendulum and was vitiated by its too uncritical faith in human reason as much as scholasticism by its exaltation of the supernatural. It remained for Immanuel Kant to utilize the results of the rationalist movement for the reconstruction of philosophy in such a way as to make it of service in the rebuilding of a theology both rational and ethical. What Luther began as a moral protest, Kant formulated into an intellectual system. He is the most influential figure of modern philosophy, because he showed men how to navigate safely the difficult channel between the extreme skepticism of Hume and the over-confident dogmatism of the scholastics.

I

Kant's Practical Approach to Experience

Ordinarily, we think of Immanuel Kant as being such a precise little thinking machine that the human juices were all squeezed out of him. It may seem a little incongruous to interpret his neat exactitudes into humanistic terms. He had no dramatic quality in himself; his writings are nowhere illuminated by flights of imagination or flashes of wit; his very habits were as regular and uninspiring as the swinging of the hour hand around the face of his watch. Yet in his involved thinking is an emphasis which has humanized all subsequent philosophy. Our search among his writings will be for this emphasis. Then we shall see how his successors have worked out its implications.

The first important distinction which Kant made was that between the pure and the practical reason. The pure reason, he said, is the mind operating alone, coldly searching for facts and explanations of them, without emotion and without prejudice. The practical reason is the intelligence, the will, and the affections operating together; that is to say, the whole man facing and solving a problem. The practical reason includes the pure reason; and both are involved in everything we do.

Corresponding to these there are two worlds —the phenomenal world or the world of sense which matches the pure reason, and is the object of scientific investigation, and the more intangible world of moral and spiritual values which matches the practical reason. The real world, according to Kant, is the second, in which the will is the central fact. The real man, in his thought, is not the being contingent on things outside himself but the self-conscious, indestructible, idealistic man. The material world is only the presentation to our senses of the transcendental world which is deeper and more real. Behind the thing we see is the "thing-in-itself," which never can be known by the intellect alone, it eludes the grasp of the pure reason.

Natural science can give us the facts about phenomena; these the pure reason can report accurately. Behind the facts, however, is a meaning, a significance which the practical reason can alone discover. While the pure reason may report on the question of true or false, it is the will alone which can judge of good or evil.

The world of religion belongs to the world of transcendental reality in which the will is dominant. The spirit of man recognizes itself as a part of the eternal reality. Its own knowledge of itself is the key to its discovery of reality, for as a free spirit it is the highest aspect of reality in the field of our experience. If man is to describe the transcendental at all, he is quite justified in trying to do it in terms of the highest he knows.

By this reasoning Kant rebuked the impertinences of both the religious and scientific dogmatists. The ecclesiastics were resisting the advancing scientists, fearing that their progress wae at enmity with faith. The men of science, on the other hand, were insisting that their methods were of such unquestionable validity as to make their conclusions irresistible, so that the supplanting of faith by assured knowledge was inevitable. Kant made plain that neither side could justify its position. Each was trying to apply a kind of thinking appropriate in its own sphere of rational activity to a sphere that demanded a different approach. Faith should welcome scientific advance, he asserted, for by it illusions as to fact, which have been falsely identified with faith, are destroyed. On the other hand, science should honor faith, for its prerogative is to interpret the facts of nature and history whatever those facts may be. The practical reason must uncover the moral worth of phenomena, a worth of which the pure reason knows nothing, and scientific investigation reveals nothing.

The practical reason also determines our actions. Life, taught Kant, is a conflict between desire and duty, in which the claims of duty are so pre-eminent as to be absolutely mandatory. Over and above all our inclinations there is a great "must" which commands us. This is his famous categorical imperative. It is the voice of the transcendental world, eternal, immutable; he who chooses to live by it will know life, but he who rejects its mandates will be crushed. If duty is to have any real meaning at all, it must be expressed in categorical, not hypothetical imperatives. So strong a grip did this concept of the moral law get upon his imagination that Kant said that the two things which most moved him in the universe were the sweep of the evening sky full of stars, and the majesty of the moral law.

In the field of practical ethics he laid down two rules which will indicate his own conclusions. In determining what principle shall govern your conduct, he said, so act that the maxim by which you act may be fit to become a universal law. For the government of our social relationships he laid down the practical imperative: act so as to use humanity, whether in your own person or another, always as an end, never merely as a means. Nothing in the world or out can possibly be regarded as good, according to him, except a good will. Where that is present, the act is right whatever the consequences; where it is absent the act can be nothing but wrong.

In Kant, then, we have an ordered universe, which we can know by direct experience to be a universe of moral good will laying upon us the categorical imperative of duty, commanding us to order our conduct in such terms that it could serve as a universal guide, and always conserving human values through the treatment of all men as ends and none of them as means. This was a long step forward in the direction of a thoroughly ethical and humane philosophy, and has served as the basis for a reconstruction of religious teaching at once rational and thoroughly moral. Modern Christian thinking began with the philosopher who rediscovered the dignity of man in the midst of a moral world.

II

FICHTE'S DIVINE MAN

Kant laid down the proposition that the two conditions of knowledge are an active self and a knowable world. He never definitely answered the question as to whether there is really order in the world, or merely an order that we have read into it. Johann Gottlieb Fichte answered that question by asserting that the order is there or we could not discover it. His first principle is that all nature is the manifestation of universal mind.

Pushing this idea to its conclusion, he taught that man and nature and God are one. Thus he rid his thinking of the traditional gap between God and man, and between God and nature. Men had always thought of God as being distinct from nature and altogether different in kind from man. Though they thought he might intervene sometimes in natural affairs, when he did, it was a supernatural event; though in his kindness he might touch men's lives, such action was only the result of his gracious overreaching of the barrier that separated him from men. Fichte dissolved that dualism in his own thinking by making all the world, including man, a revelation in forms of the finite of the Infinite Mind behind all. He saw the whole material universe and its inhabitants as complex manifestations of the Divine Personality.

We have to be careful here to distinguish between this kind of monism and pantheism.

Monism says that all the world is a manifestation of God, but that all of God is not in the world; pantheism makes all of God present in the material world. It makes no allowance for the transcendent, while monism does. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in one of his letters, has expressed this distinction in the form of equations; he writes:

"You may state the contrast between the pantheism of Spinoza and the Hebrew or Christian scheme briefly, as this:

Spinosism:

$W - G = O$; i. e., the world without God is an impossible idea.

$G - W = O$; i. e., God without the world is so likewise.

Hebrew or Christian scheme:

$W - G = O$; i. e., the same as Spinoza's premise. But

$G - W = G$; i. e., God without the world is God the self-subsistent."

Fichte's writings are full of extravagant and mystical phrases that confuse his readers, but he saw clearly that the work of Kant left us with the choice between two paths. Either we had to deny everything but nature operating as impersonally as a machine, or else we had to accept nature as the manifestation of spirit, and so governed by reason. He chose the latter and broke the path along which all idealists have followed him. The great contribution which he made, a contribution that gives him his place in this discussion, was his assertion of the unity of man and God, and of the life of God in man. This thought has been appropriated by all modern theology. By the light of his golden lamp, Fichte saw his fellow men as no whit less than divine.

III

Hegel's Crusade

Fichte brought idealism along to the point where it was willing to accept the world as it is, but saw it as alive with God, and ourselves as able to think of it because we are parts of the great thinker God. Following after him came Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, who was born in Stuttgart in 1770, and who was called to Fichte's chair in Berlin in 1818. He advanced the humane idealism of his predecessor to its next stage.

He came to the study of philosophy with two profound interests, the historical and the Christian. His preliminary training as a historian drove him to form his own philosophy of history, and his deep study of Christianity convinced him that the religious consciousness had been the true bearer of human culture throughout the years. Contemplating the story of mankind, he saw that progress has been the result of the workings of the twin factors of revolt and reconciliation. That is to say, when men first rebel against a traditional idea they go to an extreme of denial and opposition, but after the first hot protest is past, they begin to see the extravagances inherent in the revolt and so modify their position until a state of equilibrium between the old and new is established. For example, the rationalists, in their opposition to scholasticism, swung away from all authority altogether, but their successors recognized that so extreme a position was not valid, and sought for some authority somewhere, Kant being sure that he had found it in the categorical imperative.

Out of this insight into history Hegel developed his law of progress expressed in the terms: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. In the illustration above, scholasticism would be the thesis, rationalism the antithesis, and the Kantian philosophy the synthesis. This is an interesting intellectual tool, and Hegel gained a good deal of pleasure exercising his ingenuity on it. By it he worked out his own theory of the atonement; God is the thesis, man is the antithesis, and Jesus is the synthesis. The

Trinity, also, he explained. Granted, said he, that we can know God only through manifestation, then in the Godhead we must have one who wills to manifest himself, one in whom he is manifest, and one who is common to them both. Hence, in the Trinity, we have the Father as thesis, the Son as antithesis, and the Spirit as synthesis.

Obviously, however, this sort of device is little more than an intellectual trapeze for the display of mental acrobatics. Interesting enough to watch, it would, nevertheless, transform all religion into mere intellectualism. The scholastics had already done that to the king's taste, and nothing particularly was to be gained by having a modern metaphysician do it in a different way. We must look elsewhere for Hegel's real contribution to the life of religion.

That contribution may be found in the realm where he departs from metaphysics and faces up to the actual implications of the religious spirit in the world of life. It is in his expansion of the idea of redemption beyond the merely individual life to that of the whole of humanity in every department of its activity. He taught that the principle which is to save the world is vastly different from the old ascetic notion of withdrawal from affairs, and seeking after one's own redemption alone. Full salvation must be worked out in the individual life through every activity of it on the stage of practical experience. Redeemed men must plunge into shop and market-place with a new spirit that shall transform them and their methods. Individual Christians must gather themselves into churches, for in the community of believers there is strength, but nothing is less sacred than a church set upon its own aggrandizement. The body of believers must pour out its strength to cleanse family and state, business and social life. The whole world is the church's parish.

The idealism of Hegel issues unmistakably in an interpretation of Christianity as a moral crusade for the restoration of all men and their institutions to that divine likeness which is their birthright and their glory. Even this most abstruse of metaphysicians cannot resist the conclusion that of all life's values none is so precious as to be able to compete with the welfare of men. By the light of his lamp, Hegel penned the proclamation of a social crusade.

IV

SCHLEIERMACHER'S RELIGION

In so far as they touched upon the definition of religion, we may say that Kant was the prophet of ethical, Fichte of humanistic, and Hegel of intellectual religion. Contemporary with Hegel, somewhat overshadowed by him at the time but continually growing in influence since, lived Friedrich Ernst Daniel Schleiermacher, a hunchback with a noble head and face and an orator with a wonderful voice. He was born in 1768 and, after a career as preacher and pastor, was elected to the chair of theology in Berlin in 1810. In 1834 he died. He was primarily the prophet of feeling in religion.

Feeling, said he, is primary and individual. Religion is an immediate experience, as sure and as undebatable as one's knowledge of oneself. Therefore it is independent of rational argument, of historical traditions, and of institutional forms. The only important thing is that a man shall know God. Even though he come to that knowledge through sensational and bizarre methods, it is better than if he come not at all. The church is the summation and correction of feeling, its bond being simply Christian consciousness. He defined religion as the feeling of dependence upon God and the sentiment of fellowship with him.

Thus he gives a definite religious turn to the philosophical development of Kant and Hegel. Their systems of thought had laid emphasis upon the intuitive nature of religion, upon the interpretation of the universe making God immanent in all his creation, including man, and upon monism as opposed to the traditional dualism. Schleiermacher took these three emphases, and pointed out that if man is really one with God and his universe, then he will become conscious of that kinship at the deepest level of his experience, the level of the emotions. A man will know God as he knows his beloved friend, not as an intellectual thesis but as a delight and a love.

His first book was completely taken up with the exposition of this view. It was written as a defense of religion against those who despised it as being an obscurantist and paralyzing factor in human history. He showed the relation of religion to every noble human attainment, its inspiration to art, to poetry, and to all the profounder expressions of personality. These, said he, are all included in religion, even though those who create them do not acknowledge it, for they all spring from reverence for the highest, dependence upon the highest, and self-surrender to the highest. No great man ever lived, no great work was ever wrought, save in an attitude toward the universe which is identical with the religious man's attitude toward God.

Having expounded his main thesis in this first of his books, he became acutely conscious of the fact that it left much to be desired on the ethical side. Accordingly, the next year he published his *Monologues*, in which he organized his ethical teaching. Just as he had said that the beginning of religion is in the sense of dependence upon God, so he makes morality take its source in man's sense of dependence upon his fellows, and their dependence upon him. In isolation from his fellows the individual man is nothing and accomplishes nothing. The religious life comes to its climax in the complete surrender of oneself to God, and in just the same way, the consummation of the moral life is the absorption of self in the life and service of the community, a self-surrender which paradoxically leads to the fullest self-realization. Since in the deepest places of his being man is one with God, it follows that this service to humanity is identical with service to God.

Mystical, largely swayed by the almost Oriental pantheism of Spinoza, as he was, Schleiermacher was never swept away from his clear view of the ethical implications of his faith. The essence of the Christian faith to him was an inner consciousness of God, inspired by the radiant personality of Jesus, and expressing itself in devoted service to the larger community of human interests. By the glow of his golden lamp he saw clearly the face of God, and in the revelation which it brought him he read the supreme and eternal importance of human values above all others. His rich voice rings with the note of human brotherhood.

V

The New Theology

Schleiermacher inducted the new epoch in Christian theology. It is merely repeating a truism to say that his whole system has never been adopted by any of his successors. No man can ever think in terms of the generations that succeed him, and Schleiermacher would have been the very last to have desired that his teaching should be transformed into a dogmatic strait jacket. Nevertheless, subsequent religious thinking has followed in many of the paths which he blazed, rejecting only those which were too much in the direction of pantheism, or were too heavy with the oriental kind of mysticism.

Modern theology has left behind the old deductive methods of the Middle Ages, and is acclimating itself in the inductive atmosphere of the scientific age. Scholasticism began with God, endowed him with those attributes which the theologians thought the Deity ought to have, such as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, and then deduced from this prodigy the nature of the world. The modern Christian thinker begins with man whom we know, and asks what light upon the character of the universe the attributes of humanity throw. Instead of reasoning from hypothesis to experience, the theologian of to-day works from experience to hypothesis. He seeks a new appraisal of God in terms of human life.

We used to deduce the character of Jesus, for example, from the character of God. Now we begin with Jesus, and ask ourselves what light his character throws upon the personality of the Father. It is plain that we cannot know God save as he manifests himself to us. We vitiate his own manifestation, however, if we insist on reading into it just what we desire to find there. Let us examine the manifestation itself, and listen with open minds for what it has to tell us. Surely that is the only fair way to discover the actual character of God.

For us revelation and inspiration are experiences of people, not words in documents. They are internal and not external facts, operative in all generations, not merely in the past. Jesus, not the Book, is the revelation of God. The Book is unique and essential, however, as the report of the revelation. Its reflections are the beginning of Christian doctrine, bringing to us the personal reactions of the men who were in actual contact with the historical magnitude of Jesus. The Gospels are our point of departure; without them we would have no beginning at all. Their ministry, however, is not static but dynamic; that is to say, they are not mere reservoirs of proof-texts for theological systems; they are springs of living waters at which men may refresh themselves, find purging, and gain new inspiration for the living of holy lives.

Dogma as such is the supreme impertinence of the theologian. It is the declaration that he has bounded the universe with a phrase, that all wisdom is in his word. Modern religion is undogmatic, believing that truth is alive, and that true religion is a progressive adventure in understanding and fellowship. It eagerly listens for any new report of truth which may come from any source, holding that all truth must eventually lead into the presence of God.

Above all, the new theology exalts human values. Whatever we may think of its intellectual positions, there can be no doubt that ethically it has recaptured the spirit of Jesus. It begins its quest for understanding the universe with a frank appraisal of man, it searches every new truth for its human significance, and it sets its goal at a redeemed society. Believing in a Christlike God, it subordinates every other activity to that of discovering the forgotten man, and serving him as did the Nazarene himself. His social passion is the flame by which it seeks to read the riddle of the universe.

CHAPTER V

BY THE HAUNTS OF THE HUMANISTS

We have already sketched the influence of Plato in Christian thought, now we consider an ethic that may be traced from Aristotle. He defined what he called intellectual prudence as "a faculty which apprehends truth by reasoning or calculation, and issues in action in the field of human good." Nineteenth-century humanism might almost have taken that definition as its text, for it includes the intellectual faith which it upheld (apprehends truth by reasoning or calculation), the activity on which it laid so much stress (issues in action), and the goal which it made supreme (the field of human good). In nineteenth-century humanism I include the schools of F. C. S. Schiller, William James, and Borden Parker Bowne, for, in spite of different methods of approach, they all arrive quite definitely at the same destination ethically.

Humanism makes its definite entrance into English thought through Aristotle's devoted disciple, Francis Bacon. Politician, time-server, member of Parliament, Lord Chancellor, unscrupulous bribe-taker, disgraced public servant, author of the *Novum Organum*, writer of essays that tersely speak native English as do no others in the language, Bacon retains his importance in the history of thought because, of all the men of the Renaissance, he most truly caught and most completely perpetuated the spirit and method of Plato's more tough-minded successor. The two main Baconian ideas are that knowledge must begin with observed facts and that the incentive to knowledge lies in its application to life. In the last part of the *New Atlantis,* in which he outlines an ideal state, he gives a remarkable description of all the treasures of Solomon's House, the museum and laboratory in which the scientists and thinkers deposit the wonderful inventions and discoveries of this perfect kingdom. It is the house of man's achievement, the workshop of his aspirations, the symbol of his progressive mastery of his environment. The words with which the master of this house greets his visitors sum up Bacon's thought and prophecy for mankind, "The end of our foundation is the knowledge of causes, and the secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible."

Bacon was an older contemporary of Descartes, whose methods, as we have seen, served as the foundation for the thinking of the rationalists. The successors of Bacon himself were the scientifically minded philosophers, the men who lived close to the laboratories and found their inspirations there. Locke, for example, to whom the Baconian movement owed its ascendancy in the eighteenth century, was closely associated with the experimental physicists of his day. If we accept William James' distinction between "tender-minded" and "tough-minded" thinkers, we may say that this school was in the tough-minded tradition. It used the inductive method in thought rather than *a priori* reasoning.

Out of it came the skepticism of Hume which moved Kant to his critique of the pure reason and development of the conception of the practical reason. In the field of ethics it eventuated in the work of John Stuart Mill, who called his doctrine utilitarianism. He was acutely conscious of the inequalities and improvidence of the social order in which he found himself. The make-believe dignity of a luxurious and artificial community filled him with disgust. His indomitable passion for justice and moral integrity was in continual revolt against smug contentment and moral laziness. The tragic miseries, and hardly less tragic follies, of this our life moved him like pain.

Nevertheless, he was an optimist fundamentally, for he wrote, "Most of the great positive evils of the world are in themselves removable." Realizing that the injustice of the present order of things is the result of man's selfishness and stupidity, he held fast to the faith that the resources of human strength and intelligence are still enough to correct the wrongs inherent in the present system, and to evolve out of it a humane society. He was not a revolutionary radical but an evolutionary one. He began his whole thinking with faith in man's ability to build a just social and economic order, and he subordinated every other goal of human striving to this one.

The ordinary criticism of Mill is that, though few writers have so fully recognized the manifold elements of human well-being, we do not gain from his work a compact and well-proportioned definition of just what the public good is; if the ideal is discoverable, he leaves it to his reader to piece it together for himself. Allowing full force to this criticism, we must still recognize that the influence of Mill on his successors has been very great. The more careful formulation of the ideals inherent in his system has been the work of Schiller and James, re-enforced by the theistic humanism of Bowne. The thinking of all three has, of necessity, been largely influenced by the exposition of the theory of evolution which startled their generation.

I

SCHILLER'S HUMANISM

Following the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* the evolutionary hypothesis took strong hold of the minds of men, and philosophers began to formulate systems which gave it full recognition. So closely associated with the idea of evolution as to be almost inherent in it is that of progress. As men contemplated the unfolding of the forms of life from the simple to the more complex, along the whole range from protoplasm to man, it was easy for them to make development and progress almost synonymous terms. A more careful examination of the data, however, revealed the fact that there was present in some cases an evolution toward degeneracy that was just as plain as the upward trend which had been emphasized. In a world which shows a capacity both for developing higher forms and for degenerating into lower, it is quite obvious that those factors are good which speed higher evolution, and those are bad which hinder progress, or aid retrogression. Here, then, the evolutionary hypothesis supplied a novel and clear-cut definition of right and wrong. That act is right which helps life realize on its higher possibilities, and that is wrong which keeps life static or turns it backward.

It was not long before philosophies and ethical systems began to appear which worked out this thesis into an articulated doctrine. Man, they said, stands as the supreme product of evolution, therefore in him all the values of life have their most complete embodiment. If, then, the forces of progress are to be served, they must be served in and through him. He is the standard of truth and the test of righteousness. That is true which works out best in human experience, and that is right which enriches human life. Sometimes this school of thought is called pragmatism, the name assumed by William James, emphasizing the importance of the productivity of ideas. But I think that F. C. S. Schiller was nearer the heart of the movement when he named it humanism, thus stressing its motive and goal. We will not quarrel about a name, however. The important thing for us to see is the humane implication of the idea itself.

We can do no better than allow Schiller to give his own definition of the criterion for truth. "Truth," he writes, "is that manipulation of (objects) which turns out upon trial to be useful, primarily for any human end, but ultimately for that perfect harmony of our whole life which forms our final aspiration." If we translate this thought into other terms, we may state it thus: An idea is right when it works, and it works when it is successful in serving human values. It is verified if it meets the needs of mankind, and stands the rigorous test of time. Plato and Hegel had said that ideas existed in their own right, and were right or wrong in themselves, Schiller opposed this position, maintaining that an idea exists to accomplish something and that it is right or true only as it brings that thing to pass. Kant had said that an act was right if its motive was right regardless of its consequences, Schiller said that an act must be adjudged right or wrong by its consequences regardless of the spirit behind it. Accomplishment is his supreme test.

There is a certain hard-headedness about such a point of view that is irresistible. It perfectly matches the dominant mood of our age of mighty construction, swift transportation, and huge philanthropic foundations. Moreover, it is an effective escape from all forms of mediæval absolutism in ethics, and so can live happily alongside the scientific spirit which has thrown off the shackles of dogmatic obscurantism. If the twentieth century had to begin again to construct an original ethical system, it would undoubtedly produce one that would be closely akin to this. One or two of its implications are worth noting here.

It definitely meets us where we live. After the hair-splitting logic, the introspective psychology, the tortuous epistemology of the older schools, it is like a fresh breath from the sea to be told that knowledge, and ethics, and religion are modes of life, and to have the word "life" used to mean not some vague and elusive concept, but the everyday experience of adapting ourselves to our environment, physical and social. After the smoke of debate has rolled by, say the humanists, the one fact remains that truth and righteousness arise from the actual needs of life, and serve them.

This means that human effort is the crucial factor. The hope of better things lies in the intensification of effort along those lines which are now producing good things. Human society, all the values involved in what we call civilization, is the supreme work and the supreme concern of God. Man's highest accomplishment must come through his association with his fellows, and every individual realizes himself best when he becomes the servant of the collective cause. The way to the abundant life is the way of united effort seeking a common goal.

Herein is the optimistic character of humanism manifest. It casts on one side both the spirit of renunciation and the mood of despair. It calls for an enthusiastic and united effort to make things better, and is not in the least doubt as to what it means by better. As Ralph Barton Perry has expressed it, "It is the philosophy of impetuous youth, of protestantism, of democracy, of secular progress—that blend of naïveté, vigor, and adventurous courage which proposes to possess the future, despite the present and the past." It is little wonder that such an enchanting philosophy has only had to sound its horn to summon to its service vigorous and knightly men.

II

THE PRAGMATISM OF JAMES

The most fascinating of the champions of humanism is William James. He was in love with life and never lost his zest for it. His mind was restless, eager, insatiable, always ready with poised lance for the next tilt with truth. Beginning as a graduate physician he soon became a lecturer on physiology at Harvard, passed over into the field of psychology, and finally became a professor of philosophy—one of the great Harvard triumvirate, the other two members of which were Josiah Royce and George Herbert Palmer. No American thinker, with the possible exception of Emerson, has had as wide an influence abroad. His writing is so refreshing and vivid in style that it is difficult when reading him to keep one's mind on the thought, swept on as one is by the sparkling current of the words.

To him an idea is a practical substitute for actual experience. Suppose that I, sitting in New Jersey, utter the word "India," immediately the pageantry of that teeming Oriental land passes before my eyes. Or suppose that I speak the word "cold," I am immediately conscious of a different temperature quality than that which governs this summer morning. An idea is a sort of magical carpet on which you can escape from your immediate environment and construct for yourself the experiences you desire. Ideas are essentially instruments, and the value of the instrument is proved by its use.

James never swung over to the extreme radical position of Schiller, but consistently held that there is a real truth self-existent behind all things, and toward which we are striving. "For him [that is, the pragmatist], as for his critic, there can be no truth if there is nothing to be true about, . . . that is why as a pragmatist I have so carefully posited 'reality' *ab initio*." It is at this point that Bergson enters the lists on behalf of the humanists. He argues that the intellect alone is an inadequate guide to this fundamental reality because, being itself a special form of life, it cannot know the whole of life. It takes the whole man to find the whole truth. James seizes upon this superintellectual acquaintance with the world, and calls it a species of knowledge. Bergson never quite dares to name it knowledge, Dewey has carefully avoided doing so, but James does not hesitate. He insists that there is a living and sympathetic acquaintance with the inmost nature of things, which is clearly distinguishable from that knowledge about them which touches only the outer surface of reality. "The only way in which to apprehend reality's thickness, is either to experience it directly by being a part of reality oneself, or to evoke it in imagination by sympathetically divining someone else's inner life." This immediate knowledge of things, according to James, is the highest sort of knowledge, "completely consummated acquaintance."

The bearing of this upon religion must be apparent at once, for all through history the mystics have claimed an immediate communion with God which has transcended for them all other truth. "I know Him in whom I have believed," meaning by that knowledge an experience different from and more sure than the scientist's knowledge of his formulæ, has been the refuge and consolation of pious people in all generations. Without that inner assurance religion would never have survived. It constitutes the religious insight into the nature of the universe.

James has no hesitation in giving this religious intuition its place in the scheme of things. Recognizing that some fundamental aspects of the universe are beyond the reach of the mind alone, he acknowledges that certain religious assumptions cannot be proved by mere logic. We cannot, however, live in the world without taking certain attitudes toward it, and the attitude we take will be influential in determining character. For example, we must live our lives on the basis of a belief either that this world supports the man who lives by good will or that it is on the side of ill will, or that it is indifferent to the whole question. Obviously, neither position can be proved conclusively by any reasoning we have yet developed, and equally obviously, the kind of life a man lives will be largely determined by which of these attitudes he assumes. Faced with such a choice, James says that a man has the right to choose that position which appeals to his nobler self, encourages his moral will, and satisfies his loftier hopes.

This does not mean that a man can arbitrarily believe what he chooses about the world. It rests back on his fundamental proposition that an idea is right if it accomplishes its aim. The function of religious ideas is to strengthen the good impulses of life; therefore, if we accept certain beliefs concerning the universe and then find that they work in making life more bearable and more useful, we need look no further for justification of their truth. By their fruits we shall know whether they are false or true. This is in substance James' famous doctrine of the will to believe. Before we leave it, however, one point should be made clear. This right to choose between alternatives is present only where evidence for the superiority of one over the other is lacking or is indecisive; where the evidence is sufficient to guarantee the truth of one or other position it remains true, whether it brings sweetness and light to the soul or not.

With such a background it is not strange that James should have had an active interest in religion itself, an interest which bore fruit in the most stimulating book on religion produced by the first decade of the twentieth century, his *Varieties of Religious Experience.* It is still the standard study of the psychology of religion. James' point of departure for the consideration of the meaning of religion in human experience is man's consciousness of evil in his own experience, his desire to be rid of it, and his belief that deliverance is not only possible but has actually entered into the experience of the race. In other words, he puts the experience of conversion at the heart of the whole discussion. The fact that bad men have been made good he asserts as a fact with which thinkers must reckon as they reckon with any other facts of experience. Kant had contended that religion is a fact of man's inner life, essentially reasonable, yet belonging to the transcendental world; with that contention the modern phase of religious thought began. James took it and revealed its far-reaching practical implications.

It is not easy to work out a thoroughly orderly system of thought from the writings of William James. His essays are more or less in the nature of *obiter dicta.* But there can be no possible manner of doubt that his whole influence was thrown on the side of human values. In his thinking, man is so closely akin to the universe that he may come to immediate knowledge of its deepest truths, and those truths give proof of their validity by the contribution which they make to human lives.

III

Bowne's Personalism

It is plain to see that the humanism of Schiller and the pragmatism of James present an ethic which is not far removed from that of the Galilæan in its practical effect. Neither one of them, however, had any clear-cut relation to historic Christianity or any well-defined description of God. So far, indeed, did James wander in his thinking from the Christian way that he launched the suggestion of a pluralistic universe, in direct contradiction of the monotheistic teaching of Jesus. The formulation of a philosophy that was Christian to the core yet met the demands both of evolution and humanism was the work of Borden Parker Bowne. No more heroic work than his has been done in the field of Christian interpretation since Calvin's Institutes.

The Christian evolutionist must make room in his thinking for two major facts—the consummation of evolution in man and the incarnation of God in Jesus. The theory of evolution may be modified in many ways, as it has been, for example, by Kropotkin with his emphasis on mutual aid as an evolutionary factor, but it can never be so modified as to leave man in any relation to it but that of its crowning achievement. The doctrine of revelation may also be modified, as it has been recently by our recognition that the Scripture carries no authority for its scientific statements but only for its religious insights, but it can never be so modified as to remove Jesus from his supreme place as the perfect revelation of the Father. With the boldness of genius Bowne reconciled these two ideas by interpreting the universe itself in terms of personality.

Man, he believes, is not the crown of creation by some chance sequence of events, but is the fullest expression of itself to which the universe has as yet attained. He is what he is because the world which produced him is what it is. Therefore if we are to inquire what kind of a nature his world has, we must expect to find our answer in the kind of being man is. Taking the pattern of human personality and laying it over the cosmos, Bowne finds that there is so remarkable a correspondence that he is assured that the World Ground is personal. This immediately illuminates the doctrine of the incarnation, for if man is the most characteristic manifestation of the Creative Spirit, it easily follows that the perfect man will be the supreme revelation of the divine Personality. So Bowne was able to make himself at home both in his contemporary evolutionism and in historic Christianity.

From a purely philosophical point of view the most suggestive thing about Bowne's personalism is the way in which it solves the puzzle of combining unity with diversity and identity with change. Beneath the many and diverse manifestations of life is there a fundamental unity? And if so, how can we reconcile the ideas of the multiplicity of things and their essential oneness? With these questions a large proportion of metaphysical writing has been busy. Some men, like Hegel, have made the underlying unity an Absolute of whose thoughts things as they appear are manifestations; others, like James, have come to the conclusion that the whole quest for unity is misleading because the universe is pluralistic through and through. Bowne cut the Gordian knot by asserting that our self-experience solves the problem. We know change and feel it, yet through all the shift of circumstance we keep our self-conscious identity. Moreover, in the one will of the individual we have the cause for all his actions and creations. As, in our own experience, a unitary agent is able to hold diverse ideas, so every part of the universe reports itself as a fact in the consciousness of the all-embracing Personality. So completely does the concept of personality combine unity with diversity and identity with change that this alone must assure Bowne a respectful hearing among philosophers.

In practical influence, however, personalism has become much more important as an ethical dynamic than as a school of philosophy. Nor need we be very much surprised at this, for, of all his works, excellent as they are, Bowne's *Ethics* is beyond question the most admirable. As a summary of ethical theory the introduction to this book is magnificent, and its twenty pages constitute the finest single piece of writing that I have found in him.

This ethical emphasis is a logical result of his premises. If personality is the very stuff of the universe itself, it stands to reason that its safeguarding is the major obligation of life. Anything which hampers the full development of human powers is sin against God. He who impoverishes another willfully or for self-gain, he who prostitutes even the least of his fellows for his own self-interest, he who destroys another life or maims it, is setting his whole activity against the realization of the full glory of the universe, which can come only through redeemed and emancipated personalities. The man who, to serve himself, betrays the interest of even one other individual is in reality a Benedict Arnold of the whole race playing into the hands of the enemy. Every true value of the world is conserved in the conservation of human values.

Such is the ethic of Bowne. Out of it has come some of the most searching social criticism of our day. It has been most completely worked out and applied to current problems by Bishop Francis J. McConnell, one of the few really first-class minds devoted to the work of the Christian ministry, and one whose primary interest in every discussion he enters is the ethical one. Whether personalism can ever establish itself as a dominant school of philosophy I am inclined to doubt. Its epistomology seems to me particularly uncertain. But that must not blind us to its actual accomplishment. It has poured upon the altars of the Christian Church the oil of humanism which has caused their flames to shine with a more searching light upon the inhumanities of the social order with which we are identified. Bowne not only gave Christianity an intellectual framework upon which it can build for the twentieth century, he also recovered for his followers Jesus' estimate of the supreme value of human beings in the total scheme of things, and this, I believe, will ultimately appear as the greatest of all his contributions.

At the turn of the twentieth century pragmatism and personalism were molding the minds of the men who are in control of popular opinion to-day. The vogue of James, enhanced by his own peculiarly attractive writing style, has been re-enforced by a whole school of journalists who have caught his spirit, until we might say, without too much exaggeration, that pragmatism is the philosophy of the man on the street in America. Teachers particularly, who mold so much of the thinking of the country, are likely to be under the spell of pragmatism because of the tremendous prestige among them of John Dewey, whose instrumentalist philosophy is clearly akin to pragmatism. This school is also finding a sympathetic interpreter just now in Will Durant, himself a Spinozist, whose *Story of Philosophy* is unfortunately marred by the fact that it emphasizes the importance of the developing materialistic philosophies at the expense of the idealistic, and so presents a narrative which relates only half the facts.

While many journalists and popular writers have been spreading the influence of William James, the philosophy of Bowne has been popularized by the pulpit. Consciously or unconsciously, most of modern preaching is colored by his personalistic doctrine. The insistent social idealism of contemporary Christianity also gathers much of its inspiration from his work.

Ethically there is little conflict between these two influential groups. The one puts man first as the crown of evolution and the other as the Son of God, but they both put man first. James himself saw how closely allied were personalism and pragmatism, for he wrote to Bowne that they were planting their feet in the same footprints. Both exalted humane considerations though they did it from different points of view. Personal friends they were, and allies in the humane crusade. By the light of their golden lamps they both read the revelation of the cosmic dignity of man.

CHAPTER VI

IN CONTEMPORARY CHAMBERS

During the past sixty years of debate over the implications of the evolutionary hypothesis, science and religion have come to a working basis of agreement, both in concept and in vocabulary. Evolution, somewhat modified from its original Darwinian statement, is now generally accepted as being the best description up to date of the development of life on this planet. That discussion, except for a minority of thinkers, may be considered closed. The question which is agitating us now is more subtle and, in its religious implications, much more decisive than evolution ever was. It is the weighing of determinism against freedom. Are our human actions predetermined by the nature of things, so that we exercise no control over them through our own wills, or do we ourselves decide our course of conduct by our own volition? Is man simply one part in the complicated machine of the universe which grinds out events impersonally, or is he an active factor in his own destiny? Questions like these are the ones over which our contemporary leaders of thought are conflicting. The issue is the freedom of the human will.

Its bearing upon religion and ethics must be perfectly plain. If man cannot exercise a free will, then he is incapable of anything that can really be called choice; his whole course of behavior is therefore predetermined for him. Obviously, you cannot charge a man with any act over which he has no control. Hence moral responsibility ceases to exist. Ethical character in a deterministic world is a phrase without meaning.

Such a concept of the world also destroys the reality of thought, for if all we do is automatic, then our thinking is also. This means that we do not know whether it is rational or not; all we know is that it is inevitable. Thought is no more than a titillation of the nervous system at the impulse of irresistible cosmic urges. Our follies are just as true as our profoundest insights, for they are all together manifestation of the nature of things. The babblings of a madhouse in such a world become just as significant as the utterances of the sages. An out-and-out determinist discredits his own thinking, for he is only saying what he cannot help but say, like a ventriloquist's doll that seems to be speaking but is in reality manipulated by a power which it cannot know and cannot resist.

Nevertheless, the case for determinism has been pleaded recently by voices that are seductive enough to command a wide hearing. The uninterpreted theory of evolution is on the side of the determinists, for not even the most optimistic of biologists has suggested that the original protoplasm willed to divide itself and so to begin the procession of life. The development of living creatures has been an expression of the primitive urge of life regardless of the individuals involved. We have no rational ground for assigning free will to a tree, or a bird, or an animal—they are what they are because, and only because, of the life that is in them. Why, when we come to man, should we insist on interpreting his experience as an entirely new kind of behavior?

Many anthropologists and embryologists answer frankly that we should not, that man is part of the general web of life, and is bound up inseparably with both the nature and destiny of all the rest of creation. This point of view has been given a wide vogue recently by George A. Dorsey in his book, *Why We Behave Like Human Beings.* After going through it you discover that man is a combination of glands and hormones that entirely control his conduct, that these he shares with the other mammals, and that the real reason we behave like human beings is that we are so much like the beasts of the fields. The most hopeful thing he can say to us is: "Scientific intelligence may yet be born. Freedom is as yet only a goal, and a long way off, but progress toward freedom will speed up; it is of the nature of living organisms to grow by what they feed on and to climb by their own steps; the greater the freedom, the faster the pace toward the goal. That is, if man is really on the track—and that we cannot know."[1]

Man, by such a reckoning, is the hapless toy of circumstance, whose only hope is that accidentally he may strike some path that leads to light and freedom.

This same sort of determinism has found its way into much of modern psychology. Freud and his followers interpret all human behavior in terms of sex-responses, and blandly assert that the problem of an integrated personality is simply that of a normal sex life. In other words, certain physical functions lie at the basis of all definitions of behavior and govern every phase of conduct. The grip which this generalization of the wise man of Vienna has gained on the minds of our contemporaries is evidenced by the schools of psychoanalysis which have grown out of it, and by the whole trend of modern fiction. As a fundamental description of human behavior it is decidedly on the side of the determinists.

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[1] Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers, publishers.

More devastating than Freudianism, however, in its attack on freedom is the theory of the behaviorists with John B. Watson at their head. Their thesis is as simple as it is comprehensive. All human activity, they say, is made up of physico-chemical responses to physico-chemical stimuli—that and nothing more. If you put water over a flame it will boil; it has no choice in the matter, it simply reacts to heat stimuli in its characteristic way. Although the behavior of men is more complicated it is fundamentally the same; we behave in a given situation as we do because we are so constituted that the stimuli present call out the specific responses which we make. We have no more choice in the matter than the water on the stove. Watson not only rejects freedom of the will, but also declares that consciousness itself is not necessary to his thought of man. This is the most ambitious contemporary attack upon the traditional concept of man as a self-conscious, self-controlled individual, and will serve as a good point of departure for our examination of present tendencies in philosophy and ethics.

I

BERTRAND RUSSELL AND THE BEHAVIORISTS

The most thoroughgoing analysis of behaviorism that I have seen is contained in Bertrand Russell's book to which he gave the name *Philosophy*. It is all the more valuable because it comes from a mind always hospitable to new ideas, and evidently sympathetic toward this one. He builds as far as he can on behavioristic foundations and then shows clearly what are its limitations, and why it can never be a final philosophy. We shall follow his argument in this section, not only because it will etch the behavioristic position more clearly, but also because it will introduce us to the thinking of one of the most emancipated minds of our own day.

Behaviorism holds that everything that can be known about man is discoverable by the method of external observation. In other words, you cannot know anything about yourself or about anybody else which is not discoverable by a skillful observer watching from the outside with the same skill as a chemist watching his test-tubes. Memory, for example, is nothing more than the retention of habit. A rat was put into a maze from which it took forty minutes to work its way out; at the end of thirty-five trials it found its way out in six seconds, without any wrong turns. After being kept away from the maze for six months it was put in again and found its way out in two minutes, making six mistakes. This record equaled that of the twentieth trial in the original experiment. In a similar way a human being retains certain habits such as those of swimming and bicycling. Doctor Watson concludes from such facts as these: "By memory we mean nothing except the fact that when we meet a stimulus again after an absence, we do the old habitual thing that we learned to do when we were in the presence of that stimulus in the first place." All conduct, according to the behaviorists, can be explained in just as objective terms as this.

Mr. Russell acknowledges that this theory of human experience is preferable to the traditional ones in some ways. It gets rid of a lot of the mystical and confusing terms with which introspective psychology is befogged. Nevertheless, he points out, the fact remains that it is quite impossible for us to see any event in a purely objective way. The individual cannot dissociate himself from what he sees. Every event must reveal itself as a fact in the consciousness of the individual experiencing it. I cannot report what is before me in any detached sense, but only what I, out of the background of my own personality, see before me. Each of us knows the phenomena of the world only in his own mind. Every man's report has a large element of subjectivity in it. Our data are private data. It is at this point that Mr. Russell rejects behaviorism as a final philosophy:

"When Doctor Watson endeavors to eliminate subjectivity in observing rats, . . . he fails to realize that almost as long and difficult an inference is required to give us knowledge of the rat's bodily movements as to give us knowledge of its mind. And what is more, the data from which we must start . . . are data of just the sort that Doctor Watson wishes to avoid, namely, private data patent to self-observation, but not patent to anyone except the observer, This is the point at which, in my opinion, behaviorism as a final philosophy breaks down."[2]

In other words, in answer to behaviorism's assertion that knowledge of human conduct is only a more complicated aspect of physics, Mr. Russell asserts that self-observation can and does give us knowledge which, while not belonging in the category of observable physicochemical phenomena, is genuine thought just the same.

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[2] Bertrand Russell, *Philosophy*. Longmans, Green & Co., publishers. Reprinted by permission.

The being capable of this thought is man, who, alone of living things, has shown himself able to grasp the knowledge required to give him a certain mastery over his environment. This very mastery justifies the belief that the dangers of man in the future will arise, not from nature, but from man himself. Victorious in his struggle with nature, he must now decide whether he will use the energies, released by the cessation of that struggle, for conflict with his fellow men, or whether he will turn it to a collective adventure of achievement by which all mankind shall be enriched.

Impressed with the wonderful results of collective effort, Mr. Russell makes his plea for an ethic of harmony. There can be more good in a world where the desires of different individuals harmonize than in one where they conflict. Hence we have his definition of the supreme moral rule as follows: Act so as to produce harmonious rather than discordant desires. This rule applies as far as a man's influence extends—within himself, in his family, in his city, in his country, and throughout the world if he be the kind of man who makes his life felt internationally. The desire for power, rooted in that ego-impulse which Freud's successor, Doctor Adler, makes the most dominant of all human impulses, should be directed toward power over things rather than over people. He sums up his chapter on Ethics with the phrase: "The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge." In spite of his agnosticism in other directions, Bertrand Russell is definitely on the side of those who are resisting the deadening effect of deterministic philosophy, and is a champion of the supremacy of human values even in this post-war age.

II

EDDINGTON AND RELATIVITY

An interesting personal adventure into the fields of philosophy has been that of A. S. Eddington, Plumian Professor of Astronomy in Cambridge University, and one of the leading mathematical physicists of the world. He has recorded the history of his thought for us in his book, *The Nature of the Physical World,* which contains the Gifford Lectures which he delivered in 1927. He set out to show that the new scientific developments provide novel material which the philosopher cannot afford to overlook, and, when indicating how the material might be used, found it necessary to build up a coherent system for his own thought. In this process he found himself more and more leaving behind his deterministic premises and moving toward an idealistic position, which finally he adopted. His own statement of the change is this: "I would like to recall that the idealistic tinge in my conception of the physical world arose out of mathematical researches on the relativity theory. In so far as I had any earlier philosophical views, they were of an entirely different complexion."[3]

It is not possible for us to trace through all the paths of this fascinating book, which is the best popular statement of the modern scientific view of our universe, but we can sum up the more definitive aspects of it under three considerations: the breakdown of the old physics, the new insights of relativity, and the fundamentally intellectual nature of the most satisfactory descriptions of the world.

Between 1905 and 1911 the researches of Einstein, Minkowski, and Rutherford gave us an entirely new conception of the structure of the atom. Previously we had thought of it as being hard substance; now we know that the atom is as porous as the solar system. If we eliminated all the unfilled space in a man's body and collected his protons and electrons into one mass, the man would be reduced to a speck just visible with a magnifying glass.

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[3] Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

What we think of as substance is space pervaded by fields of force. In other words, the most significant of recent advances in physical science is its frank recognition that it is dealing with a world of shadows, or, to put it in a more suggestive way, that the character of the world of physics is symbolic.

Not only has the old atom passed away, but extraordinary things have also been found out about the measuring scales, which were the very foundations upon which the whole structure of physics was reared. It has been shown that they are not constant under all circumstances. A rod moving at high speed is shorter when it lies along its line of motion than it is when it lies across it. This does not depend at all upon the material of the rod but only upon its speed. It is just as true for a rod of steel as for a rod of India-rubber. The constancy of the measuring rod has crumbled away. An observer's measurements depend upon his motion. Observers on different planets with the same velocity will agree as to the location of the objects in the universe, but observers on planets with different velocities will have different frames of location.

This is the starting point of the theory of relativity. Einstein takes the position that the question of a uniquely right frame of space does not arise. There is a frame of space relative to a terrestrial observer, another frame relative to the nebular observers, others relative to other stars. Frames of space are relative. He does not assert that everything is relative, but that we must look more deeply for the absolute things, since the phenomena that first present themselves to our notice are for the most part relative. What he is trying to do in the theory of relativity is to reconcile the differences between observers, and to determine statements of fact which will describe phenomena independently of any particular point of view. Relativity is the theory of the expression of general physical facts in a way which shall be common to all observers and independent of any one in particular. Its name is something of a misnomer, for it is really an attempt at correlativity, at eliminating the differences that arise from individual points of view. This point is discussed at some length, and made perfectly clear, by Bolton in his *Introduction to the Theory of Relativity*. It is enough for us here to see that Einstein's work is the quest for a mathematical unity beneath all the diversities of all possible frames of space.

This is clearly an intellectual adventure, an enterprise begun, continued, and brought to its consummation at the mental level of life. The long trek of physical investigation brings us back, then, to the fundamental fact that mind is the first and most direct thing in our experience, and all else is remote inference from it. The only subject presented to me for study is the content of my consciousness. Grant consciousness, then there arises the problem of combining the viewpoints of the people who share the world, and so the external world of physics arises as a symposium of the worlds presented to different viewpoints. Assuming that the symposium has been correctly carried out, then we may call the external world and all that appears in it real, without further ado.

Consciousness itself is not sharply defined, but fades into subconsciousness. Beyond that we must postulate something which, while it is indefinite, is yet continuous with our mental nature. And so Eddington arrives at his conclusion that the fundamental stuff of the world is mind stuff.

Where does this leave man? This question our scientist answers clearly. The time during which man has been on the earth is extremely small compared with the age of the earth or of the sun. It is, moreover, unlikely that the whole purpose of creation has been staked on the one planet on which we live, so that we have no justification for considering ourselves the only race that has been or will be gifted with the mystery of consciousness. At the present time, however, man is probably supreme among all the races of creation. Freedom is real, for what appears to be determinism in the universe is simply the determinism of physical laws reflecting the determinism of our method of inference. It reflects not so much the nature of the world as the stiffness of the tools we use in observing it.

In Eddington we have a thoroughly modern mind, easily at home in the most completely scientific circles. As he again and again reminds us, he comes to his book not as a philosopher but as a physicist. Yet as he speaks out of the impersonal atmosphere of the laboratory he adds his voice to those who have found life's deepest meaning in mental activity and life's highest values in human well-being. His is a thoroughly ethical philosophy.

III

Defining a Good Act

The real difficulty with contemporary determinism is that it is too naïve. It proceeds on the assumption that the scientific method which has produced such remarkable results in the laboratory may be applied with equal effectiveness in the field of human behavior. If we add two parts of hydrogen to one of oxygen, we get water; there is no particular mystery about it, we can see it happen before our eyes. Why not, then, get rid of all the mysterious ideas about human nature, and observe it in the same way? What gets results in studying trees ought to get equally good results in studying men. This sounds realistic and sophisticated, and it gets results. As a method of studying the ways in which we behave it has justified itself beyond any manner of doubt.

As a final report on experience, however, it is neither realistic nor sophisticated, but naïve. It fails to take account of the thinker. When Doctor Watson puts a rat in a maze, takes his watch in his hand, times the escape of the animal, writes down his data, draws his inferences, he is engaged in a subjective enterprise that had its beginning in his own thought, that reported itself to his own mind, and that issued in his own interpretations. Suppose that an idiot with a watch that ran backward had been sitting beside the doctor, making his own crazy notations, and drawing from them a set of inferences entirely different from those of his neighbor, by what standard is the behaviorist going to distinguish as to which is true and which is false? Both, according to his theory, are equally inevitable. It is not enough to say that he will take the consensus of mankind, for history has shown too often that the one man may be right and the majority wrong. A man is not necessarily an idiot because he disagrees with his neighbors. The simple fact is that the behaviorist, or anyone else who sets out to give a description of human activity, has no grounds for faith in his own reasoning if he rejects the contributions of consciousness and intelligence to his experience.

Go to the extreme with the materialistic reasoner, follow his reasonings to the end, yield yourself to his logic, and when you are all done, no matter how conclusive his arguments may seem to be, you are still face to face with a person who is so constituted that he can develop a rational system of thought. You cannot escape the thinker. Visit the laboratories of the scientists, and let your eager mind delight in the revelations of their experiments, and when you come away you must still realize that the most wonderful thing in the whole demonstration is the human mind which can build laboratories and experiment with its environment. Even though man should be able to build a philosophy which thoroughly discredited his own position in the universe, he would still be superior to his philosophy, as the creator is above the creature.

If there be any divine purpose running through events, it must be realized through the wills and activities of men. If creative or emergent evolution is to fulfill itself in a nobler order than we yet know, it must go on from its most complete stage in human life. Divine plan or natural, man is the only gateway we can now see to richer manifestations of life. Therefore our judgments of right or wrong must be cast into terms of serving human interests. That is ethical which raises human standards, and that is unethical which impoverishes human experience at any point.

There are two periods in the history of an act upon which judgment of its rightness or wrongness may be based. The first precedes its overt appearance and is the time devoted to the determination of its motive and intent by its doer; the other is the period during which its consequences are working themselves out. They are quite distinct. In fact, the second phase of an act may entirely defeat both the motive and intent which lay back of it. It does not seem to me, therefore, that Kant's position, making any act right if the motive behind it be right regardless of the consequences, can be accepted; nor do I think that the pragmatic view which judges an act solely by consequences and not at all by motive is entirely satisfactory. Both factors must be included in any genuinely comprehensive definition of right and wrong.

Contemplating a line of conduct, a man is faced by the question of just why he is embarking on it. If he starts with the spirit of good will, that is to say, if his desire is so to conduct himself that his behavior will enrich the experience of every human being it influences, then he is faced with the necessity of thinking through his program to see whether, as far as he can foretell, it will accomplish that end. If he is satisfied that it will, and so acts, then we have a good act up to that point, an unimpeachable act. Let us, therefore, lay this down as our first moral rule: when a man acts with a desire to serve human well-being, and plans his act as intelligently as he can to serve that end, he may call his act good.

Supposing, however, that his intelligence is not adequate, and, as a result, his action bears fruit in oppression or unfairness, so that human interests are not served by it, but are, rather, injured. Then, regardless of his sincerity, it is a bad act in fact. This proposition we may state as follows: when a man contemplates the result of his action, and sees it working for human disservice, he can call that action nothing but bad.

As far as any man's personal conduct is concerned we can ask no more than that he live by the first rule. His social usefulness, however, must be judged by the second rule. That which will operate to make the two estimates of him identical is his moral intelligence, his ability accurately to foretell the consequences of his action. Where he has every opportunity to know what will be the influence of his behavior, he must be held sternly to account; in those fields where there may be doubt, a larger charity in judging him must be exercised. The moral obligation on every man is to make his conduct as intelligently controlled as possible. A comprehensive definition of a good act would therefore be as follows: an act motivated by good will, intelligently planned to enrich human experience, and accomplishing that end, is a thoroughly good act.

This puts upon the men of good will who are looking forward to the humane society the extra responsibility of being intellectually alert and industrious. Along with the proclamation of high-sounding ideals must go sinewy thinking that will assure the transformation of good motives into desirable consequences. One fact is perfectly clear—the test of genuine morality is not adherence to some form of absolutist ethics, nor is it the vagaries of individual desire. It is social usefulness, planning to safeguard all human interests, building a community in which every individual shall have a chance at the more abundant life. The men of the golden lamp are one with Jesus here.

PART III

THE FLAMING TORCH

FOREWORD

Our purpose thus far has been twofold. We have explored the history of Christianity to see how essential has been the passion of brotherhood in its unfolding, how characteristic of its heroes has been the forgetting of themselves in concentration of their powers on improving the conditions of their fellows. We have also seen that as the winds of the centuries winnow the thoughts of the philosophers, all go off as chaff except those which carry in them the grain of humane purpose and social idealism. Religion and philosophy agree that man's way to deeper understanding of his universe lies through profounder appreciation of and devotion to his fellow men. Now we shall take this standard to measure some of the institutions by which our society lives.

In his *Christmas Carol,* Charles Dickens has this vivid picture of a familiar London scene in winter:

"Meanwhile the fog and darkness thickened so that people ran about with flaring links, proffering their services to go before horses and carriages and conduct them on their way." One of the unforgettable memories of a London fog is the appearance of the little Cockney boys with their torches and their cries, "Li-cher-'ome, suh, Li-cher-'ome?" With their islands of light in a sea of fog, they are ready to pilot travelers on their homeward way.

The thinking of our day is so perplexed by new facts, new theories, new points of view, that many of those who are trying honestly to find their way around in the field of moral judgment are as confused as strangers in a London fog. Old standards seem to them either inadequate or untenable. They feel that they must begin again to define a new ethic for a new day, and so they grasp eagerly at even a preface to morals.

We may not flood every detail of conduct with unquestioning light, by lifting on high our humane lamp, but I do believe that the living flame of Jesus, at which philosophy has kindled its brightest lamps, is a torch that may light us step by step through the fog until we see the lights of home. Therefore to our whole society and to every institution that is a part of it we will bring this simple question, "How does it affect human lives?" And our judgment can be none other than that every phase of society is evil that is indifferent to men and women, and every activity of society good that brings a larger and more abundant experience to every human being in its reach. The flaring link we carry will light the faces of men and women, and by what is written on those faces we shall judge the institutions by which men live, accepting the premise that the Christ approves only those agencies that open lovelier vistas of experience to all the human beings they affect.

CHAPTER I

THE SOCIAL IDEAL OF CHRISTIANITY

IF an intelligent visitor from another planet should make an exhaustive study of our civilization, I am sure that the most amazing thing about it to his mind would be the fact that while some children are born into homes that afford them every opportunity for culture, others come into the world under such conditions that they are doomed to stunted lives right from the start. It would seem to him incredible that parents whose children are born in fine homes should be willing to have other people's children born under conditions that rob them of fresh air, proper nourishment, and even the pretense of culture. It is only because we have grown up with things as they are that we are not continually wondering how a civilization as apparently intelligent as ours can be so unintelligent as to allow children to be brought into the world under such conditions as prevail in the slums of our great cities and in the poorer of our mining towns. It is the most convincing of all evidence that we have not given thought to the fundamental conditions in our social system.

A child born in poverty is our most poignant reminder that there exists among us an unequal distribution of wealth, with a consequent inequality in the distribution of the privileges and opportunities that wealth can buy. It is easy to say that money itself means nothing, but it is impossible to deny that money as representing social privilege and opportunity means a good deal—so much, indeed, that its present unequal distribution constitutes one of the four inescapable criticisms of our contemporary society. Along with it we must put the serflike position of the laborer who has no voice in determining when he shall work, and therefore what his wage over a long period shall be; the brutality of the profit motive which dehumanizes business and launches economic imperialism; and the madness of competition which sows the seeds of all strife and war.

In correspondence with these criticisms we have four types of radicals, if such we must call those who are enlisted to work for drastic social change. The social radical interprets all events in terms of a class war between those who have the world's goods and those who have not. The industrial radical turns his face away from the ordinary ways of politics and seeks to accomplish his revision of society through a new organization of industry wherein the laborer is accounted equal with the capitalist. The economic radical asserts that the foundation of traditional economics is wrong in its insistence on the profit motive, that we cannot hope for a better society until we find a way to move men by higher appeals than that. The ethical radical proceeds on the assumption that there can never be a harmonious society until competition is eliminated and co-operation is substituted in its place. As a matter of fact, there need be no quarreling among these different points of view, for each of them is justified, and all of them are complementary to the rest. A comprehensive critique is phrased in terms that include all of them. The object of such an analysis of society is not to arouse passions that men may destroy what we have, but to stir thought, that we may reconstruct conditions on a fairer plan.

The necessity for a more humane social order is being given a new emphasis by the work of the social psychologists, whose basic contention is that the individual is a product of his environment. Man has never been a solitary creature, a lonely forager over the face of the earth; those pictures, which are sometimes presented, of primitive man wandering alone in search of food have no approved evidence to support them. From the earliest traces we can find, we have to conclude that man has evolved as a member of society. The two factors out of which has grown his intellectual life are the twin social agencies, suggestion and imitation. This can mean nothing less than that the most important fact about a man is the kind of environment in which he is brought up. It is all very well for society to build houses of detention for those who break its laws, but punishment of the criminal will never cure crime because it is beginning at the wrong end of the history. Every crime that is committed is a challenge not merely to an investigation of the individual as such, but also to an inquiry into society itself to find out what factors have played into the man's life to make a criminal out of the human material that was in him. Society makes man in its own image.

The advocates of eugenics, with their insistence on hereditary factors in experience, lend their support also to exalting the importance of social considerations in the production of character. There need be no dispute between social psychologists and the eugenists, for by the time the former have included what they call prenatal environment, and even preconceptual environment, they are talking about precisely the same things as eugenics, although they call them by different names. Both eugenics and social psychology result in a new appreciation of the influence of social groups, the eugenists putting their main emphasis upon the primary group—the family—and the social psychologists including in their reckoning the derivative groups, such as school, country, social strata, and all the combinations of people that go to make up an individual's social environment. The important point for us to see here is that they both emphasize the fact that man is a social creature, whose character is largely fixed by the society in which he lives his life.

We have no space to review what is known as the Gestalt psychology, but in the main it lends its support to the social view of man, for it starts out from the fundamental position that the way to see things truly is to see them as wholes, that the minute you divide what you are looking at into parts you have automatically created a new phenomenon which is different from that which you set out to study. Applied here, that principle can mean nothing save that we have not seen man as he is unless we have viewed him in his total experience, which certainly includes the influences of society which play in upon him. A man cannot be seen in true perspective except against the background of the social order which molded him.

This social emphasis which we ordinarily consider as belonging characteristically to the twentieth century is clearly foreshadowed in the teachings of Jesus concerning the kingdom of God. He used that term in two ways, primarily as a name for that inner spiritual loyalty which links the individual to God, as when he said, "The kingdom of God is within you," and, derivatively from that, as the name of the community of spiritually alive people, the union of all those who share the same loyalty. Thus his kingdom was a twofold ideal, including both individual experience and social accomplishment. The religion of Jesus bears fruit in both individual salvation and social redemption. It touches every relationship that involves human interests, its ideal of perfect love means the rule of love in every activity without exception, it is good will in command of all the resources and relationships of men. At the heart of the model prayer is the far-reaching social petition, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

The social teaching of Christianity begins with one clear conviction, that there is but one genuinely sacred thing on earth—human personality. Every other object that seems sacred—the altar, the home, the flag, the fatherland—is so only because it is an instrument to serve men and to bring them benefits. Not one of them is sacred in its own right; each derives its sanctity from its power to cleanse and bless the lives of men. The holy mystery of human personality is the one sacred possession of this our breathing world.

Starting out from this premise, the social ideal of Christianity has not much difficulty in defining its goal. It holds steadfastly to the purpose of enabling every human being to share to the full in all things that give value to human life. Viewed without passion, such a purpose can seem nothing less than just. It is true that it is opposed to the traditional idea that special privileges belong to those who, by the accident of birth, are members of the aristocracy, but we have long ago rejected the implications of such social pretensions. Where it hits us hard is not in that philosophy but in the one which we have put in its place. We proceed on the assumption that special privileges belong to those who can buy them as a result of overcoming their competitors in trade. The Christian attitude is that mere ability in money making is just as absurd a basis on which to distribute life's privileges as the accident of birth. Every man, regardless of who his father was, or of how large a check he can sign, has an inherent right to a chance to share in everything that gives meaning to human living. Such a chance many do not now have, and they are precisely the ones that the followers of the Carpenter cannot allow the world to forget.

It is amazing how easy it is to forget them. I was sitting one day with a well-to-do friend of mine, whom I admire greatly for his charm as well as his accomplishments, watching a baseball game which had drawn together some twenty thousand people on a week-day afternoon. Waving his hand toward the crowd he said, "You need not worry your head overmuch about the laboring man when so many of them can take time off on a summer afternoon to see a game like this." It was a direct answer to some of the criticisms he had heard me offer of our unfair economic system, and, as far as it went, it was undebatable. But think of the people he had forgotten—the cast-offs past sixty-five years of age anxious about where the next dollar was to come from, the seamstresses working in the sweatshops of the very city through which we rode in his fine car, the miners working no more than seven months out of the year, the line-up outside the employment bureaus in the morning, to say nothing of the unemployed millions in Europe, the starving thousands of Asia, and the enslaved natives of Africa. These are they whom the followers of

Jesus cannot forget without forever denying the spirit of their Lord.

This is no criticism of the millionaire as an individual. He is just as much a creature of the present order as I am; he has learned to walk its amazing ways with a little surer step, that is all. The thing I am saying is that a social order that denies to some men the benefits that are necessary to a complete life thereby carries its own proof that it is unchristian. You simply cannot reconcile it with the ideals of the Christ. If all of us together will face that fact as it is, without casting aspersions on individuals, or getting sensitive about its possible personal applications, then collectively we can work out a system that will be more just.

Human intelligence is equal to the task of social reconstruction. Let us once become convinced that the burdens of life are distributed unevenly, that some shoulders are stooped with loads that others could easily share, and there will be no doubt about our working out a scheme for their more even distribution. Once we get the courage to face the fact that the rewards of life are given out unequally, that some receive wages out of all proportion to the service they are rendering society, while others are inadequately paid, and we shall soon devise some fairer sharing in the common weal. The first need is to let the facts themselves stir in our consciousness until they stab our consciences awake. The prophetic voices of the followers of Jesus are called to be so insistent that society cannot forget the men who are submerged.

The vision we have is of a balanced life for every man—industrially, culturally, recreationally, in human service, and religiously. All men should have at least a chance to know the fullness of such a life. If the religion of Jesus can keep men's hearts so stirred that their minds will be continually working toward this ideal, there is no power that can prevent the consummation of the humane society, in which God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

TWENTY-FIVE years ago nobody would have thought it necessary to devote any time at all to the definition of the Christian ideal of the family. Our fathers took it for granted that the home was beyond the reach of any skepticism, that it was the one institution which no man in his senses would question. No more significant example of the changes that have been taking place in our thinking could possibly be adduced than the fact that nowadays it is a common thing for even religious periodicals to print articles on the possibility of the modification of the home in the interest of general human good. In the thorough overhauling to which our social conceptions have been subjected we have not left the home undisturbed. Among us are many honest and serious students of society who are openly advocating the reexamination of the institution of marriage in the light of recent social development. It is not enough merely to call these people names; we must answer them by making the case for the family so strong that it is irresistible. Dogmatic fuming is no more convincing in defense of the family than it is in any other field.

The first important fact about the home is that it is the place where the individual is treated as an individual. In school the child is one of many pupils in his grade; in the factory the worker is a number, a time-card, a production unit; in the office the stenographer or bookkeeper is a detail of the routine; but at home they are Charlie and Dad and Betty and Bill. There they can relax in the company of people who recognize their right to have emotions and opinions. It is the refuge where they can bring their individuality into play, where they are known and loved for what they are, where their laughter is free and their tears may flow, where they may be themselves. In a world of efficient organization dominating huge combinations of men, the home is still the asylum of individual personality, where the cogs of the machine of business come to life as men and women with pulsing hearts and climbing hopes.

As the primary social group, the family introduces the child to the whole field of human relationships. The home is the place where we develop the social ideals and attitudes which color our subsequent lives. The whole process of adjustment to other people, and to groups in which we find ourselves, begins with the child's making his place in his own family circle. It is the training ground for the social being looking forward to living in organized society.

This means quite definitely that the home is the place where character is given its direction. The growing man may reject the intellectual positions which dominated the thinking of his early days, he may grow out of the religious conceptions which his parents held, but the social attitudes learned in the home become woven into the very warp and woof of his character. I doubt if any man ever really develops new habits of living together with his fellows after he leaves the family circle. When we realize how important are these social attitudes, and how inadequate is the training of the average parent for directing them, indeed, how unconscious most parents are that such direction is involved in parenthood at all, it is little wonder that some are raising the question as to whether this is the most intelligent plan we can devise for training men for social harmony. Whatever opinions we may hold on that point, however, the home is at present the nursery of human nature, and most of us are what we are largely as a result of the families in which we were reared.

Prior to the advent of the machine age the home had little competition for the leisure time of its members. The saloon, of course, was always there as the major menace against all the values the home sought to conserve, but, apart from that, the home held undisputed its central position as the place of relaxation. To-day, however, it has formidable rivals who are putting in attractive claims for the hours the home used to monopolize. The automobile, for example, whisks young people away for the evening into a chaperonless world, from which it brings them back at uncertain hours. The moving picture also transports them into a kingdom of make-believe that stamps its images indelibly upon their eyes, leaving impressions that may be the very opposite from those that the parents would choose for their offspring. The radio and the automatic instruments of music are all the machine age has given the home with which to fight these encroachments on its time, and they are not enough. The home, in the traditional sense, is not as necessary to the growing youth of to-day as it has been to their predecessors. They find their more romantic moments and exciting recreations outside of it. Consequently, a generation is growing up to whom the word itself carries none of the rich connotation it has always had.

A second factor that is operating to break down the old exaltation of the home is the new economic independence of women. No longer is homemaking the only career open to girls; practically every avenue of commercial and professional activity beckons to them. Nor is participation in the business world confined to those who deliberately forego matrimony; many women marry with every intention of continuing their independent careers. Even when motherhood enters, there are some who give the care of the children over to trained nurses while they go on with their chosen work outside the home. In addition to all that is involved in the foregoing statements, this means that when incompatibility of any kind appears between husband and wife, she is no longer held in leash by the fact that she depends for her bread and butter on her spouse, consequently she can contemplate divorce without economic fear. All these influences working together are gradually changing the whole attitude of women toward the family. The girl of to-day faces marriage with an entirely different set of intentions from those which her grandmother had under the same circumstances.

The freer mingling of the two sexes in educational institutions and in the world of commerce has resulted in the evolution of a new attitude toward the whole question of sex. The most obvious aspect of this is the franker handling of it in print and in public and private speech. About ten years ago a fellow commuter told me with amazement that on the preceding evening his son, a medical student, had discussed without any apparent embarrassment the whole question of the sex function in human experience with his fiancée, who was a fellow student in the same medical school. Much water has gone under the bridge in ten years, for to-day such a conversation would hardly be judged worthy of any comment whatever. We have grown accustomed to discussions of this topic that would have caused many blushes not so very long ago. Birth-control, for example, is no longer among the tabooed subjects. It is advocated in the press and on the platform by people who are the acme of conventionality. The unusual emphasis which has been placed recently on the function of the sex instinct in experience has undoubtedly operated to break down some of the old ideas of the sanctity of the home, for there are many people who are misled by exaggerated ideas of the influence of sex into believing that marriage itself is little more than an arrangement of convenience. Such an idea, widely held, is definitely tending to cheapen the concept of the home and the ideal of the family.

The fact remains that all these attacks combined have not been able to break down the pre-eminent importance of family life. We may have to modify our conception of the home at some points, but nothing has yet been suggested which can dislodge it from its central place in organized society. The substitutes which have been proposed look ineffective beside it, in spite of all its faults. No other arrangement, to begin with, has in it the rich emotional reserves that the home possesses, and their priceless contribution to the developing life must certainly be conserved under any plan that is to meet the demands of a complete experience. The thing we have to do is to keep them as a foundation and to build upon them homes as rich in practical wisdom as in loving solicitude.

The weak spot in the present arrangement is the fact that parents come to their responsibilities without any training for them whatever. The average mother holds her first baby in her arms without any vision of her opportunity, any knowledge of child psychology, or any clear conception of what is expected of her. A stenographer who knew as little about her new job would be fired the first day. Therefore it seems to me that the first task of the church in saving the home is to develop some scheme of training for parenthood.

One of the most remarkable families that I have ever known came out of the hinterland of Michigan. At the close of the Civil War a young man took his bride into the woods to open up a section which the government had given him. He cleared away the trees in one spot and built his log-cabin. In that primitive little home in the wild their first child was born, a son whom his mother named Forest Ray, because, she said, he had come like a ray of light into the forest. As the years went by, the industry of the father transformed the woods into a farm, and a family of children was reared. The oldest boy was the first lad from that town to go away to college, and to-day he is an astronomer with an international reputation derived from his work as the head of his department in one of the leading universities of the country. Of the other children, one boy is head of the department of mathematics in another large university, another is director of an institute of economics with headquarters in Washington, two are successful business men on a large scale, and one of them has been mentioned as a possible candidate for governor in his State, another is a leading citizen of the Michigan city in which he resides, and the one girl has been a teacher in the Detroit schools for years.

Such a record is not made by accident. Somewhere in the background is the secret which explains it all. In this case that secret is not hard to find. The little bride who went up into the forest carried with her a clear conception of what motherhood meant, and gave her fine mind and womanly strength without any stint to the children God gave her. With none to help her save the trees and the stars and the running streams she molded character into the growing lives of her young. That woman and her accomplishment stand in my mind as a picture of what parenthood may be if parents can be aroused to understand the possibilities of what they are called upon to do. The religion of Jesus, fully understood, will allow no one to rest content with mediocre parenthood. It will continually flash before parents' eyes that vision of the child without which the home perishes.

This extra vision will entail extra responsibility, and many among us refuse it because we fear it may put a curb upon our doing precisely what we choose when we choose. Our favorite teachers are those who tell us to do what we like. We have acquired the habit of arguing that our liberty is the most precious of our possessions, and therefore we reject anything that hampers our freedom as an assault on our prerogatives. The point we miss is that our responsibilities are as surely the measure of our attainment as our liberty. The quality of a man's character is most clearly revealed by the social burdens which he voluntarily assumes and intelligently manages. Evasion of responsibility is evidence of cowardice or lack of vision, not of success in any valid sense. It may be smart but it is not wise, and the distinction is between that which makes a moment glitter, and that which serves the deepest interests of human living. The religion of Jesus has no more essential message to parents in our day than the assurance that they who lose their lives for love's sake shall find them rich in unsuspected fascination.

The real grip which religion exercises on the lives of men is so absolutely dependent on the place it occupies in the homes in which they are brought up that we are justified in saying that it is directly proportional to it. We cannot raise a religious generation in irreligious or careless homes. Sensitive to the spirit of God as a violin string to the touch of a virtuoso, no child can grow in a home whose human love is sanctified by the sharing of all in consciousness of the divine love without carrying forever in his heart a reminder of the Father's care. The Christian family has proved its value in the past, for the work of the world has been largely done by those who have shared its privileges. The heart of the home is right. No substitute has yet been suggested which looks as potent for good. It is ours, therefore, to exalt the best that is in it, while we seek continually to make it more intelligently serve human ends.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIAN PATRIOTISM

THREE stories will serve as an introduction to the theme of this chapter.

A few months ago the United States Senate was confronted with a resolution calling for the abandonment of the practice of running the Christian flag above the Stars and Stripes at the mastheads of our ships during divine service on Sunday mornings. The matter itself was comparatively trivial, but, as often happens, the debate swung over to more momentous issues than those which appeared on the surface of the resolution itself. From the question of the flag of the church taking precedence over the national emblem, the discussion quickly passed to that of whether country or conscience is the final authority in conduct. At least one senator frankly said that, while he was a loyal American citizen, there was one loyalty in his life more compelling than his patriotism, and that was his loyalty to God. The issue was not settled by any formal vote—so few really important matters can be—but it raised the question, and it is one of those questions which will not down once they are raised.

During the past season a remarkable English play called "Wings Over Europe" had a successful run on Broadway. Its plot centered in a young idealist who had discovered how to release the energy of the atom, so that he had it in his power to wipe out the universe in an instant. Armed with his secret he confronted the British Cabinet with a demand that they lead the way to the abandonment of armaments under penalty, if they refused, of his letting loose the destruction of which he was capable. Facing the situation as a group of disillusioned and practical men, they agreed that humanity was not to be trusted with the power the young physicist controlled, and so they asked him, for humanity's sake, to destroy his formula and to forget it. That is, they all agreed but one, and he was Daredevil Dick, the Minister of War, who refused to vote in the affirmative for a proposition that would take out of the hands of Britain so potent a weapon for the subjugation of the other nations of the world. He was, as you might say, too good a patriot to vote with his colleagues.

The third story is familiar enough. It tells of a woman, clad in the uniform of healing, who was convicted by her country's enemies of planning the escape of their prisoners of war. Cruel as the strife in which they were engaged, they stood her before a firing squad and shot her for being kinder than anyone can be allowed to be in times of war. Before she died she spoke a word which has become louder in the ears of men than the volley which killed her, and that word was, "Patriotism is not enough."

The Senate raised a question. Daredevil Dick has his answer which rings as clear as reveille on the morning air; he says that nothing can come before flag and country, that patriotism is all. Edith Cavell has another answer, wistful as the pale glow of the morning star when dawn sends the light of a new day up into the sky, and her word is that patriotism is not enough. There they stand, the soldier and the nurse, the man of the red sword and the woman of the red cross; which of them, think you, is right?

The answer is not as simple as it looks, for genuine patriotism is unselfish love of country and, like any other self-forgetting love, it sublimates human powers. It would be manifestly unfair to say that patriotism has no constructive contribution to make to the world's life. History would give us no support in that.

On a hill that overlooks the sapphire waters of the Mediterranean stand a group of ruins so beautiful even in their decay that we travel half way around the world to look upon them still. I suppose that men will never tire of sitting in the shade of the Parthenon to dream of the Athens of Pericles in all the wonder of its golden age. Those superb works of architectural perfection were a national monument, an achievement of creative patriotism, a flowering into stone of love of country.

The city in which the Brownings chose to make their home was Florence. What ghosts they had for company as they walked its streets in the twilight: Dante, with the fires of purgatory slumbering in his eyes; Michelangelo, with the fingers likest of all men's to the fingers of God; Cellini, half devil and half saint; Ghiberti, of the monumental doors; Savonarola, whose voice was a searing flame; Andrea del Sarto, master of the perfect line; Della Robbia, whose colors are like healing ointments; and perchance, Da Vinci, the most sensational genius of them all—these men all lived for Florence and loved it. They continually refreshed their spirits at the sparkling springs of their devotion to their city. Like Virgil, Shakespeare, and Goethe, their fine art was the expression of their patriotic love.

The nineteenth century, prolific of great names in so many lines of activity, presents us with two pre-eminent men who stand for character as well as for accomplishment. Along with the appreciation of what they did there always comes a subtle inspiration from what they were. Abraham Lincoln and William Ewart Gladstone, however wise or unwise their policies may have been, were men of the first order whose memories will continue to bless and purge their nations' lives as long as humanity retains the ability to respond to noble souls. In each of them love of country was a consuming passion; patriotism must be credited with its part in making them the men they were.

We cannot dismiss with a mere gesture of disdain a factor of experience that has accomplished as much, both in and through men, as this. Except for the high inspiration of religion, no motive has brought such excellent works from men's hands as patriotism. It is all good as long as it works constructively.

The difficulty is that patriotism has proved itself, at its worst, to be so heinously destructive that no other passion can match it for the havoc it has wrought upon the happiness of men. Defined as narrow nationalism and expressing itself in scorn and distrust of other peoples, it has first divided men and then destroyed them. Because of it no woman is able to bring a man child into the world without a clutch of terror at her heart, for some day he may have to go out to die, or to things that are even worse than death. Against the sacred values of personality patriotism has been guilty of measureless crimes.

Sometimes it has led to personal ambitions that have been disastrous to whole generations of men. On the tomb of Napoleon men have carved, with an irony none the less pointed for being unconscious, his dying request that his bones might rest on the banks of the Seine in the midst of the people whom he loved so much. May any nation be forever delivered from having such a lover again! He sacrificed these men he loved upon a score of battlefields; he entered the homes for which he felt such tenderness only to take from them the flower of their strength never to return it; he led the objects of his uncontrollable affection across the snow-swept horrors of his Russian campaign; he drained the life-blood of a generation in France. Yet to-day he is the hero of Paris. There is not a boy of the city but grows up with the idea that he is the greatest Frenchman of history, above all his compatriots the one most to be emulated. Other cities and other lands have their military heroes. I have simply mentioned Napoleon because he, more than any other one man, incarnates the spirit of national pride which leads on to folly and disaster.

Worse, however, than an incidental outburst of chauvinism fostered by some individual ambition is the continuous attitude of suspicion which foments hatred between nations. The debacle of 1914 was no sudden phenomenon hurled out of the blue; it was the crop of the whirlwind which the nations had sown with fantastic care through years of mutual distrust ripening into hate. The Europe of the first decade of the twentieth century was a perfect picture of the conditions which narrow and unintelligent provincialism parading as patriotism can produce in the family of nations. That same continent in the second decade was an equally perfect picture of the results that inevitably follow such a preparation. Any man who intentionally fosters distrust between peoples, even though he use all the approved shibboleths of patriotism to do it, is a Judas betraying humanity to a new crucifixion. The man who does it unintentionally is a social lunatic playing with matches in a loft full of hay.

Unfortunately, the passions of our provincial loyalties are quickly aroused. Professional patriots have easily inflammable emotions at their command. But they are the emotions that lead to the madness of war, and it is madness in spite of all the monuments and histories by which we try to glorify it as something fine. Men have their moments of inspiring self-forgetfulness in the midst of battle, and we go back to those moments with high hearts to remind ourselves of the heights to which men may rise, but even the most heroic deeds cannot blot out the fact that war itself is madness. It sweeps away our critical faculties with prejudice; it feeds itself upon its own passion for destruction; it kills human beings indiscriminately regardless of individual genius or worth; it makes a whole generation calloused to the loss of human life; and it mortgages the future not only in terms of finance but also of vengeance, for a new crop of hatreds spring full-armed into being from every peace that is won by the sword. It is the foe of all our noblest achievements. A community that is united can build a Rheims Cathedral or a Cloth Hall at Ypres, but a divided world destroys them. It is guilty of the supreme immorality, the cheapening of human life, in the train of which lust and crime and lesser immoralities are inevitably found. That kind of patriotism which is narrow and dogmatic nationalism is the source of war, and as such is the most dangerous of all social sins.

To that kind of patriotism, wherever it lifts its head, the religion of Jesus is uncompromisingly opposed. It cannot countenance provincialism, for it begins with the proposition that all men are brethren whose common life can best be served through love only. Over against the divisions of men which are stressed by pride and selfishness it puts its emphasis on the solidarity of mankind as the profoundest social truth. Instead of agreeing that war is inevitable, it asserts that it is at once inhumane and unnecessary.

This does not mean that Christianity is opposed to love of country any more than it means that it is opposed to loyalty to one's family. It simply means that in the hierarchy of our loyalties patriotism cannot assert its infallibility without dispute. Like every other claimant upon our strength, patriotism must submit its proposals to critical scrutiny, and when they come into conflict with moral conviction it must be willing to revise them. Love of country can never be logically twisted into meaning unquestioning acceptance of the authority of those in civil power for the moment. The Christian can never agree to abdicate his moral sovereignty in favor of any political group. He builds his life on the premise that his first loyalty is to the right as God gives him to see the right.

The Christian head of a family loves his own children with the kind of affection that makes him indulge the hope that they will devote their talents to the whole community in such a way as to win its gratitude. There is no rivalry in his mind between the family and the larger community. His family pride indeed feeds itself upon traditions of service to the state. Our social values have been increased by the sort of holy emulation which leads to friendly rivalry among individuals as to which may best serve the group. Christian patriotism would raise love to country to that level, so that each patriot would seek to prove his love of country by making his the most enlightened land contributing the most to the common weal of all lands.

We have learned a most enlightening lesson when we have really understood that wisdom for us does not necessarily imply ignorance for somebody else, or our riches inevitably entail someone else's poverty. We need not be rivals in the possession of the good things of this world, but may be partners in the sharing of them. If we are rich at another's expense, that is not proof of our ability, but only of the unintelligent handling of our resources. In a world intelligently conceived, we should look upon any underprivileged group or any exploited nation as a humiliating commentary on our lack of ability to manage things right. That nation is the greatest which is foremost in blazing the trail toward an equitable world, for not only is that the trail to economic stability, but also the establishment of genuine friendliness among the nations. Christian patriotism means such a love of country as serves a love of all humanity.

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIANITY AND THE PEACE OF THE WORLD

THE poetry of Christianity began with the song of the angels, "Peace on earth among men of good will"; one of our favorite titles for the Master is "Prince of Peace"; there is not a Christian ritual in the world but has in it a prayer for peace; in fact, the most consistent social note that Christianity has struck throughout all the years of its activity has been the note of peace. We have been taught from our mothers' knees that the religion of Jesus would introduce universal peace, and we have believed it with all the ardor of our religious faith. On other points sects and creeds may differ, but on this all are agreed. There can be no doubt about the fact that Christianity is aiming always at universal peace. That is to say, there can be no doubt in our minds. Unfortunately, some other people in the world have not had the same advantages as we have had for getting acquainted with Christianity. They have not attended church school, nor had the tender instruction of our mothers, nor heard the stories of the birth of Christ. All they know of Christianity is what the Christian nations have written into their histories. And, strangely enough, they are not so sure about our religion being a harbinger of peace.

Suppose that you should gather a circle of good talkers together that included Africans, Chinese, Japanese, Indians from India, and Red Indians from our own land, Turks, and Egyptians, none of whom was Christian, but all of whom were well informed on their nations' histories. Their conversation would be good to hear, and perhaps they might get into a discussion of the nature of Christianity. The African could tell how it was the white man's code of slavery; the Chinese might speak of it as the Occidental philosophy of plunder; the Japanese could interpret it as the inspiration of Western military skill; the man of India, as a rod of oppression; the Red Indian, as an apology for rape and theft; the Turk, as a relentless hate; and the Egyptian, as a foreign superstition, but it would probably not occur to any of them, out of their own histories, to think of it as an adventure in the establishment of universal peace. They have all seen too many of the followers of the Prince of Peace storming their citadels with swords dripping human blood.

Perhaps you consider the judgment of such a circle would be too harsh. We will turn, therefore, from them to an imaginary but unprejudiced visitor to our world who comes into our Christian cities to find out from their monuments what manner of men we are. We could not allow him to leave New York till he had seen Riverside Drive with its wonderful boulevard and glorious views. Among the many remembrances of famous men his curious eyes would find there, he would have no difficulty in picking out the two outstanding ones—for the most beautiful is that erected to the memory of soldiers and sailors, and the most impressive is the tomb of Grant with its suggestive motto, "Let us have peace." In London he would find the tallest monument of that Christian city to be a shaft erected in memory of an admiral unusually skilled in destroying ships loaded with men. Paris could not possibly let him escape without a visit to its shrine, the tomb of Napoleon, nor Rome till he had seen its two men on horseback, Victor Immanuel and Garibaldi. Berlin and Vienna would be no whit behind in displaying their heroes to this interested visitor. On the lawn of the Capitol of one of our mid-Western States with which I am familiar there are displayed two cannon, a monument to the Civil War governor of the State, memorials to the Engineers and Sharpshooters who served in the Civil War, two other war monuments, and nothing else. Within the building a whole hall is devoted to the tattered flags that were carried in battle. After his visits to the other cities, and in the midst of these symbols, I imagine our visitor would be a little puzzled to hear a summer preacher on this Capitol lawn announce that He whom we worship is the God of peace rather than bloodshed, of love rather than hate.

Thomas Hardy looked at our world in the Christmastime of 1924, and wrote a quatrain for the season:

> " 'Peace upon earth,' was said. We sing it
> And pay a million priests to bring it.
> After two thousand years of mass
> We've got as far as poison gas."

Is that a fair verdict? If it is not, where is it in error? Must we consider the present unhappy condition of the world to be an indictment of Christianity as such? We are all familiar with Chesterton's answer to the statement that Christianity has been tried and found wanting, namely, that it has been found hard and never tried, but even so witty an answer only raises a new flock of questions. In the first place, is it true? And if it is, whose fault is it that it has never been tried—the priests', the people's, whose? All the fine resolutions of recent months cannot blot out the ugly fact that in the year 1914 of the Prince of Peace, those nations most expert in his teachings staged the bloodiest conflict of human history. That is a stubborn and unavoidable fact which means either that the religion of Jesus is merely a visionary aspiration or else that it has been inadequately understood and therefore unfaithfully represented.

Jesus' own formula for peace is simple and comprehensive enough to forbid misunderstanding of it. He says that if all men treat all other men on the basis of sympathetic understanding, mutual respect, and constructive helpfulness, they will produce a society at once stable and peaceful. Few men doubt this proposition in the abstract. Our faith does not fall down at that point.

It fails at a far more vital point. We do not believe that it is practicable here and now. Consequently, it does not affect our immediate human contacts. It does not get over into the realm of actual conduct. We relegate our vision of peace to the company of those ideals which we define as alluring but unattainable dreams. We are paralyzed before we start by the skepticism that says that what we are seeking is unattainable. In a characteristic plea for peace which I once heard William Jennings Bryan make to a group of Boston business men, he reiterated again and again the question, "Cannot America step out upon the promises of God?" The only answer we can make to that query is, "No, she cannot." Our faith is not equal to so heroic a test as that. Perhaps we are a little uncertain about the whole question of the promises of God. We will cheer the peacemaker; we will look through glistening eyes at the vision with which he thrills us; we will wish with all our hearts that his vision might come true, but in our inmost souls we do not believe him. We count his fountain of peace a mirage, and plunge back, sick at heart, to make our preparations for the next war that we are convinced is inevitable. We have no confidence in man's ability to live at peace with man.

This is precisely the place where we leave Jesus. The skepticism of the twentieth century is courteous to the Christ, but it crucifies him in its own way by treating him as an impractical dreamer, who said beautiful things out of a wonderful experience, who lived an exemplary life and died a noble death, whose personality we cannot afford to forget, but who has no practical message for the actual affairs of men. The modern man is glad to have his wife entertain Jesus for tea, but he has no intention of inviting him to a directors' meeting. While it is fashionable to applaud him, it would, of course, be out of the question to follow him. In our Christian civilization our statesmen make eulogistic references to our Christ in their speeches, but not one of them has to bother himself with the thought that his constituents are taking Jesus seriously enough to want his ideals actually to modify foreign policies.

We dismiss the Master by insisting that we must season his teaching with the salt of common sense. By common sense we mean that hard-headed philosophy of life which men have worked out in the rough-and-tumble of practical affairs. We generally accept its precepts uncritically, and so we fail to see what a sorry figure common sense really cuts in the story of the world. It is common sense that has given us the slums of our great cities, the waste of our economic order, the silly divisions of men into classes, and all the madness of the market place. It is common sense that has drawn boundaries between men dividing them into little, provincial groups called nations that build armaments against one another until they fly at each other's throats. It is common sense which has given us a world so deeply scarred with war that men are loath to believe that those scars can ever be removed. Yet for this riotous human folly which we call common sense we are willing to reject the leadership of Christ.

It is time for the world to take a rest from the common sense of men, that it may learn from the uncommon sense of Jesus. He is the only man of history who has a program adequate to world peace because he alone has seen that peace is not a political device, but a spiritual experience. There can never be peace among men who are not at peace within themselves. That is the fundamental in the whole discussion which most of us overlook. We allow ourselves to become sidetracked from it by debates about machinery.

The problem of peace goes deeper than the establishment of Leagues of Nations, World Courts, and codified international laws. It probes into the very nature of our whole social order. We live in a society built on rivalry and division. Competition, we smugly say, is the life of trade. In other words, our whole mercantile life is motivated by the spirit of battle, wherein each combatant strives ruthlessly to pile up his store of spoils. Our children are trained from the cradle to think in terms of mine and thine, our institutions of learning create intercollegiate rivalries that break out frequently into public exhibitions of ill will, our business ethics are founded on the assumption that success means the accumulation of as much of this world's goods as possible regardless of who suffers in the process; even some of our churches talk in terms of their competitors. Yet in the midst of such a society, motivated by selfish interest from beginning to end, we are fatuous enough to talk about universal peace.

International war is simply the most sensational and disastrous manifestation of the method and spirit that dominate everything we do. The international devices for arbitration and conciliation are good as far as they go, in the same sense that old age pensions and widow-relief funds are praiseworthy. They are healing salves on some of the sore spots of our body politic, and, therefore, should receive the full support of the followers of Jesus. They are equally ineffective, however, in that they do not go to the organic root of the trouble. War is here because this is an acquisitive society, and as long as we retain the profit motive as the characteristic urge to accomplishment so long we shall inevitably have wars. If material gain is the highest good in human experience, then men will have no hesitation in fighting for it. Political ingenuity, in an order like ours, may delay, but it cannot eliminate wars.

The only factor that can abolish war is the spirit of good will in the hearts of men. Fear cannot do it, nor can prudence. To put our faith in either one of them is to build on the quicksands. Jesus never appealed to either. He proceeded always on the conviction that the only emotion able to command the whole life, and to bring all its parts into harmonious operation, is love. Here is his motive for complete individual living and for successful social adjustment. If men are capable of living by it we shall have a happy society that will endure, if men are incapable of it, then we shall continue to have civilizations torn within themselves by strife among their members until, at last, one after another, they join the number of these that belong to the past.

Peace will come when a generation arises that has the high courage of a faith that takes Jesus seriously, and expects men here and now to know the experience and to find the way of peace. The tantalizing fact about our present world is that there are enough professing Christians among the dominant peoples of the world to control their policies right now, so that if the followers of Jesus throughout the nations would deal with each other on the basis of good will, the era of peace within society and throughout it could be inaugurated tomorrow. The weakness is not in Christ, nor in the world outside the church. It is in our own lack of vision, our own timidity, and, above all, our own lack of faith in the absolute rightness of Him whom we call our Master.

CHAPTER V

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

It is easier to applaud education than to define it. As a social ideal we are sure that we want every child to have the privilege of the schools, but most of us would have some difficulty in explaining just what we expect our educational processes to accomplish in the lives of our youth. We are rather hazy about the exact benefits of an education, and the more we see of a certain type of college student the hazier we become, but we persist in holding on to our faith in our schools because, beneath our questionings, we carry the conviction that valuable ends are certainly served by them. In our franker moments we admit that we are only groping toward those ends; nevertheless, we are sure they are there. What, then, are the objects of an education?

From a purely practical point of view a man has a right to expect that his schooling will enable him to do his own work well. This is a legitimate demand, for no worker, whether he be laborer, artisan, artist, or professional man, can be happy with the knowledge that his work is poorly done if he has any sense of social obligation at all. A man's toil is his contribution to the community, the stone which he builds into the structure of civilization, the lift which he gives under the common load. He cannot retain his self-respect if it be not the finest workmanship of which he is capable, and he will certainly realize an extra satisfaction in his experience if he has the consciousness that his work is both constructive and excellently wrought. Every man, therefore, is justified in his expectation that his schooling shall make him a good craftsman.

Society itself is lax and unwise if it does not so mobilize the forces of education as to make individuals good members of the social group. The classroom is the place where the potential citizen is instructed in the language, history, and customs of his community. In this sense, education is society's device for the perpetuation of its own characteristic forms. When an individual is graduated from the schools he is prepared to look out upon life, and to order his own conduct, within the *mores* of the social group to which he belongs. He knows his own people and what they expect of him. Obviously, however, society has failed to realize on its full opportunity if it has not also introduced social control into the experience of its members, an *esprit de corps* which will make them willing to accept social obligation, to play the game with their comrades in their community. The lay members of society have a right to demand of the educators that they fit the young people of their institutions to become intelligent and dependable members of the community.

In a more general way an education should certainly help a man to be at home in his universe. This means primarily helping him to understand the nature and extent of the physical world in which he must live his life, but it also means much more than that, for it includes enabling him to gain such an attitude toward his experiences that they shall not overwhelm him. It means the development of a philosophy of life which will equip him to come to terms with his world in all its phases. Matthew Arnold gave a comprehensive definition of an educated man when he described Sophocles as one who saw life steadily and saw it whole. A complete education should certainly introduce true perspective into one's outlook.

The school that is worthy of the name will also open before the feet of its students the way into the fraternity of the lovers of learning, that vast company of men and women of all races and times who have broadened out the highway of enlightenment for their fellows. They have their own vocabulary and their own glow of joy; they are the goodly company of the world's thinkers; their words are embodied in books that twine themselves about men's minds, enchanting and enchaining them. Theirs is the fraternity without barrier of casts or wealth; in it meet the Gentile and the Jew, the millionaire with his sumptuous library, and the boy with his few pennies, exploring the old second-hand book store, the traveler lost in contemplation of some first edition that makes his fingers itch to own it, and every man or boy who has ever lost himself in an absorbing page. Education should sound in every student's ear the music of that siren Truth, who woos men, not to the rocks of disappointment, but to the heights whence life's clearer vistas are to be seen.

Education also carries a sort of commission in its own etymology, for, by derivation, the word means to lead out or to bring forth. An educator is one who brings out what is within those committed to his care. In other words, education is a process of self-discovery. A discussion group, with which I used to meet, struggled for a long time over the definition of love, and finally agreed tentatively on this one: love is that in a person which enables him to see the possibilities in another life, and drives him to devote himself to making them come true. However that may be for a general and comprehensive definition, it is the best one I know for the teacher. The real instructor of the young is one who sees the possibilities in them to which everybody else is blind, and devotes himself to bringing those possibilities out. True education will make it possible for an individual to realize on all the resources of his personality.

At its best, education is society enlisted in a crusade to quicken the lives and broaden the interests of its immature members. Naturally, so humanistic a purpose has flourished wherever the religion of Jesus has had free rein. Among the forgotten people of the ancient world was the child. With his genius for discovering values in other lives that the world overlooked, Jesus set a child in the midst of a crowd looking for the definition of greatness. His followers have never allowed the child to lose his central place. Universal education is a policy that has been confined to Christian countries, nor is the reason hard to find, for Jesus kept the child central in all his thinking. Our modern educational systems are the direct outgrowth of the Master's love for the little ones.

Beside the old gateway of Harvard College there is a tablet set in the wall which is inscribed with a quotation from one of the diaries of the founders of the Bay State colony. It says, in effect, that after they landed in this country they first built houses to protect themselves against the weather, then churches for the worship of God, and then schools in order that their children might not suffer from an illiterate ministry when their present ministers should lie in the dust. Here is the record that says that the foundations of the oldest college in the United States were laid in the Christian conviction and Christian sacrifice of the Christian pioneers. Yale and Princeton had much the same sort of origin. Over the door of the old church in Providence are inscribed the words, "This church is built for the worship of God and the holding of Commencement exercises." That linking of religion and education has been typical of our history. You can trail the Christian pioneers across this continent not only by the churches they built, but also by the colleges they reared. Home, church, and school have been the rallying points of every Christian community in our trek toward the west.

At length, under the pressure of Christian public opinion, the States themselves began to provide for all grades of education from the primary schools through to the land grant colleges and the State universities, until to-day a child may go from the kindergarten to his doctorate in classrooms provided by the community of which he is a member. This is a remarkable achievement—so remarkable that, unless we remind ourselves, we are apt to forget that its inspiration and origin have been in the vision and determination of those who are followers of the Nazarene.

The paradox of the situation is that in the historic working out of education it has become more and more divorced from religion until to-day we have education without any special reference to Christianity. The teaching of religion is definitely out of our schools. This would not be so bad if everything else were not in; but see what the present condition implies for the thinking of the youth growing up in it. The one enterprise directly touching human lives, on which the whole community is united, is the school. There for thirteen of the formative years of their lives the children are gathered together to learn those things which the community counts it important for them to know. In addition to the fundamental subjects—the three R's, history, geography, and hygiene—they are taught manual work, sewing, civics, music, art—in fact, everything but religion. What is the logical conclusion to draw from such a state of affairs? Surely, none other than that the consensus in the community is that these other things are more normal, if not more important, than religion. No child could go through our high schools without a clear knowledge of George Washington, but he could easily matriculate at college without any intelligent understanding of the person, life, or teaching of Jesus. Cæsar and Napoleon may enter the classroom without embarrassment, but Moses and Paul may not cross its threshold unless disguised.

Religion is out of our schools because the Protestant denominations have forced it out. Their historical differences have been so bitter that they have not been able to agree on what portions of the Bible may safely be used, or on what interpretations may be given universal currency. Any attempt to reinstate religious instruction in the public schools would probably meet with the determined opposition of the Roman Catholic Church, but that would not be its only obstacle, for, even now, it would be a perplexing task to get Fundamentalist and Modernist to accept the same teacher. The elements that would have to be reconciled before we could have public school instruction in the religion of Jesus are so diverse as to be bewildering.

Nevertheless, the stark fact remains that the result of our present method is that two thirds of the young people of America under eighteen years of age are without any kind of religious instruction from any source whatever. To them the church is an unexplored institution and the name of Deity is merely an emphatic monosyllable. Everything that religion has to contribute to a life they are without. They mature and die without having heard once any effective portrayal of the one Man of history who knew how to live supremely. We have made our separation of church and state so effective that we have separated two thirds of our population from religion altogether. If the Russian Soviet republic really wishes to eliminate religion from its boundaries, it could do no better than to study our technique.

The unpalatable fact which we have not considered critically enough is that education is not necessarily a good in itself. The expert brain must be controlled or it may easily prove a social menace. This factor of control is the point at which our institutions of learning are failing; there is no assurance in our system of training that its products will be any better controlled from within than they would have been if they had never gone to school at all. Every once in a while some college president issues an edict forbidding the undergraduates to drive automobiles in or about the campus, because they are so reckless that they cannot be trusted with cars. Such an order seems to me to be a confession of defeat from the university. If the flower of our educational system cannot handle wisely the instruments of the society in which they are going to live, what earthly good has their education been to them? No man is educated who has not learned self-control.

Religion, as a vital factor in experience, introduces this control, for it brings into the life the social vision and self-respect out of which genuine control comes. No man who has tarried in the company of Jesus can be satisfied with any kind of mediocrity. A result so frequent as to be characteristic of conversion is the quickening of æsthetic appreciation and intellectual vigor. A Christian experience starts the life climbing.

This means that Christianity is an inspiration to every adventure of learning. If this is my Father's world, then I have a right to be in it and to know it, and every advance I make in understanding it is a step nearer to the consummation of my comradeship with him. Facts live because they are his facts, and every trail of learning lures because of the assurance that at its end it leads to completer knowledge of him. So far from hampering the quester after truth, a genuine religious faith will light his way and his laboratory with a new flame of inspiration. It will check him only when he is tempted to use his knowledge against the common good. Religion controls the thinker only in the sense that it turns his thoughts toward the serving of humane ends. The character of Jesus stands for that fine culture which includes swift appreciation, apt expression, and self-control.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS

To industry, as to every other form of activity that involves men and women, we apply the Christian standard, asserting that no question is rightly and therefore finally settled until every humane interest involved in it has been thoroughly safeguarded. In the midst of the whir and chatter of the machines we raise our voices to ask three insistent questions: Is it well with the men? Is it well with the women? Is it well with the children? Unless and until these questions can be answered in the affirmative it is not well with industry itself.

When we contemplate the new conditions which have been brought about by the advent of the machine, we realize that perhaps the most important of them has been the compacting of society. This means that, instead of the old self-sufficient community living its own life by itself, we now have communities interlinked so closely that their old boundary lines have become anachronisms. As a result of this breakdown of the old divisions markets have expanded. In response to this expansion we are developing huge industrial organizations that operate on a nation-wide—or even world-wide—scale, employ men and women by the thousands, and get out their goods on a mass-production and high-pressure sales basis. These efficiently organized corporations operating throughout a more compact society are a product of the industrial era whose importance as aggressive members of the community it would be hard to overestimate.

As far as the worker himself is concerned, the most influential fact is that machinery has largely robbed him of the extra-pecuniary compensations for his work. Ordinarily, constructive activity carries with it certain rewards that are apart from the money wages involved. There is the joy of absorbing creative work, the satisfaction of seeing raw material take shape under one's hands, the craftman's delighted contemplation of a finished product well made. Mass production, by so far dividing labor that each workman performs one operation over and over again without any initiative or any expression of his own individuality, has taken out of the experience of the laborer these nonfinancial rewards. His work is not his own creation, and he has no stake worth mentioning in the finished product. He is little else than a more complicated detail of the machine at which he works. Consequently, he works for nothing but his pay. And work done for nothing but pay is sullen business.

An important political result of this dehumanizing of work has been a reinvigoration of democracy around the world. I say "around the world" advisedly, for a contemplation of our American scene alone might not justify my statement. Include Russia and the Orient and Central Europe, however, and there can be no doubt of a revival of democracy. In the eighteenth century men revolted against the idea of political autocracy; their language was that of political revolution. The contemporary resurgence of democracy is different. It is the revolt of the human spirit against the machine idea. You can take the body of a man and bind it to a machine, but you cannot so ensnare the spirit of man. It spreads its wings in rebellion against such limitations, and the expression of that rebellion is the modern renaissance of democratic ideals.

Moreover, we are dealing now with a generation that thinks in terms of higher standards of living than its predecessors. People demand more of life than they did because industry itself, by manufacturing more things more cheaply, and so putting them within the price range of larger groups, has made them expect more. This condition is exaggerated by the fact that men are carrying the memory of the extravagant luxuries of the war period. The laborer has not forgotten his silk shirts.

These four effects of industry—a more compact society, the robbing of men of their creative joy in their work, the reawakening of democracy, and the lifting of the standard of living—raise definite moral issues. In a more compact society, for example, the pagan profit motive is presented with a wider range in which to operate. Huge industrial organizations have no personal contacts with their employees and, consequently, no conscience about hiring, working, or firing them. Moreover, competition between these gigantic units becomes more and more merciless as they grow, and the welfare of the worker has small chance of consideration if it stands in the way of meeting competition. Looking at these organizations from another angle, there is the proved danger that as they grow in power and wealth they may also become more and more cynically indifferent to considerations of public welfare or social responsibility. They mix in public affairs to bribe politicians and to mold policies to serve their pocketbooks. The cry of the stockholders is for dividends, and the executive of the big corporation is allowed the luxury of no other motive for any policy than the increasing of the company's earnings.

Taking from men the nonfinancial returns of their labor exaggerates the always difficult conflict between the work a man does and his desires. Caught in the meshes of the industrial system, the average worker has no choice as to his work, can earn only when the corporation says that he may, and must go when his employer gives the word. He has no voice in his own destiny, nor any reliable information as to the policies and programs of those for whom he works. He cannot dig himself into a specialist's position from which the company cannot afford to discharge him, because the machine has made it possible to replace almost any man in any factory with a green hand at only a nominal loss. A young worker with one day's experience may be just as skillful at most routine factory operations as the old hand after twenty or thirty years. Every job is precarious. There is no more contact between a man's desires and his work now than there was in the old slave system, and the average employer actually feels less responsibility for his laborers than the old slave-owner felt for his slaves. He feels that he satisfies all their moral claims on him when he hands them their pay. He has no personal stake in their well-being.

The rebirth of democracy is throwing into bold relief the social unrest and class suspicions that are forever seething just beneath the surface of our active world. He is simply living in a world of make-believe who does not understand that the laboring groups are thinking of the capitalists as their enemies, and of government as being controlled by men of wealth. Soft speeches by the president of the American Federation of Labor at business men's clubs and military academies must not lull us to false security. Deep in his heart the average laboring man is suspicious of the employing class and distrusts his rulers. Such an attitude breeds easy-going apathy as long as things go fairly well, cynicism when the shoe begins to pinch, and revolution when genuine hard times come. It is an ominous event that casts long shadows ahead when men begin to lose confidence in the government under which they live.

The demand of the workers for more of the good things of life emphasizes the differences in the living levels of the various groups of our society. The very fact that industry has brought wealth and luxury to many means that it has widened the gulf between the standards of living of those who have plenty and those who have not. While the sons and daughters of the directors are lolling around on the sands of Florida the children of the workers are shivering in the grip of a Northern winter; and the very night that the president's wife serves an eight-course dinner the wife of the laborer, temporarily laid off, goes hungrily to bed. Such contrasts are unpleasant, but they are also inescapable, and they eat like an acid into the minds of the workers who dare to think.

It is of the very genius of the religion of Jesus to face up to such conditions as these. John the Baptizer, representative of the older faith, came fasting, for he was an ascetic denying life; but Jesus came eating and drinking, for he preached the religion of affirmation. He has no word bidding us to save ourselves by withdrawing from life; he calls us to lose ourselves by plunging into life with the spirit of good will. Our task is to show men how to make the machine the servant of man, how to enlist all the power of industry in building the more abundant life. True Christianity is not an escape but a crusade. We are called to put redemptive power into society, to use the best knowledge and the most efficient machinery of men in the interests of providing a richer experience for every man.

This simply means that, following the lead of the Master, we set the child in the midst, asserting that the first standard by which a business must be judged is not its profits, but what it does to the men and women it touches, both in its factory and in its markets. The modern industrial system is not to be reckoned great simply because of its huge machinery and million-dollar investments. It is great only as it serves life. Increased efficiency as such means nothing unless as a result of it human life is enriched all along the line. Whatever its rating or its dividends, a business is cheap if it holds men cheap, degrades women, and stunts children.

Wherever our modern system tends to forget the common man the Christian Church must make itself the advocate of the forgotten man. If the rewards of industry are unequally divided, the church must say so, and keep on saying so until the conscience of society is aroused to set the human wrong right. Those who have caught the spirit of the Master cannot be silent in the face of injustice and cruelty resulting from the operations of unintelligent selfishness. They must cry aloud until a public opinion is formed which even the most cynical of organizations must respect. By so doing they will earn a good deal of misunderstanding and abuse, but every preacher ought to have one sermon on "The Christian Duty of Making a Nuisance of Oneself." He can get all sorts of illustrations from such men as Lord Shaftesbury and William Lloyd Garrison. Then when something as big as they fought for gets hold of him, he ought to be ready to follow in their train. Wherever human wrong lifts its head the good soldier of Jesus Christ ought to be ready to unsheathe the sword of the Spirit.

This is so far from being alien to the spirit of our religion that, if our analysis of its development has been at all true, I believe that we would be safe in saying that the deepest insights into the nature of God have come to those who have been absorbed in some humane program. Remind yourself again of Moses leading a people from slavery, Amos oppressed by the injustices of his countrymen, Hosea wrestling with a domestic tragedy, Isaiah depressed by contemporary materialism, Jesus protesting against petrified religion, Luther in rebellion against an ecclesiasticism seeking only its own perpetuation, and Wesley aroused by the post-Restoration immorality of England. If the Christianity of the twentieth century is to gain an insight into the character of God which will give us a concept of him adequate to the day in which we live, it must find that concept through grappling with the moral questions of our own day that are raised by our own way of life. If we evade them, our spiritual power will be gone, for spiritual power does not come from the repetition of old phrases or as a magical gift from the sky. It is the power to face the actual situation that confronts us, and to solve its problems in the spirit of the Christ.

In the midst of an industrial age the followers of Jesus are called to keep the social conscience active and intelligent. This means that we shall not be continually setting up some unreal specter to waste our ammunition on, but will face the whole situation as it is. The responsibility for remedying present conditions is not upon the shoulders of the employing class alone. Entangled in the economic web, they are as helpless as the rest of us. We cannot have real improvement until we have an aroused public opinion that will lift all of us together to a higher level.

That such a prospect is not entirely visionary is proved by the progress we have made in the social control of industry in the past twenty-five years. Such arrangements as safety devices in the factories, workmen's compensation laws, group savings and insurance programs, state industrial relations commissions, and widows' pensions are clear gains. We have them because public opinion demands them. American capital invested in the Orient makes no such provisions of its own accord. It is as inhumane as ever because uncontrolled by social conscience. The arousing of that conscience everywhere is one of the immediate tasks of the church.

Realizing that no ideal will work itself out automatically, the follower of Jesus must set himself to the arduous intellectual effort of thinking through the practical problems raised by industry. It is not enough merely to generalize and to shout for ideals in general. This is a practical world and there are certain immediate steps which are obvious, and for which we may plead in concrete and specific terms.

Among them we may put such things as the determination scientifically of the fatigue point for men and women in various industries, as a datum which will prove its value not only in conserving human resources, but also in making for more efficient organization of working time. Another definition that is needed for clear discussion is the scientific determination of what actually constitutes a living wage in the American sense, so that we shall have some idea as to the meaning of the terms in which we are talking. Added to these should be the evolution of some form of democratic control of management and profits that recongizes the right of labor to have a voice in its own destiny, and a claim on industry's profits in the same sense as capital. Certainly, there should be worked out an organization of industry that will assure permanent employment instead of the periodic and seasonal work now in vogue in so many industries, and thus mean an assured wage instead of the present uncertainty. Old age too should have some sort of provision so that the worker will not be thrown out on the street when he begins to slow up, without assurance of either work or income. More fundamental and more difficult, there should nevertheless be a determined attempt to transform our educational processes so that from childhood up men will be trained in the motivation of service rather than that of mere self-interest.

With thoroughly open minds, the followers of Jesus must be quick and eager to support every effort that gives promise of enriching any human experience or of introducing a touch of radiance into any drab and shadowed life.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHRISTIAN'S LEISURE

By leisure time I mean those hours which are not absorbed by the work at which we earn our bread. It is the time with which we can do as we like. Some people like to say, with a great sense of importance, "I am so busy that I have no leisure time; every minute I have is consumed by my work." Such a statement is usually intended to be disdainful, but it is actually a confession of defeat, meaning that circumstances are in control of the man rather than the man of circumstances. Anyone without leisure is living a slave experience, having no liberty and no escape.

As a matter of fact, there are few such people. Leisure is becoming increasingly essential in our industrial age, and the speeding up of production is continually shortening the working day so that men and women have more and more free time at their disposal. No plan for a humane society can be complete which fails to prepare men for this important phase of their experience.

In a sense our leisure time is the most important that we have, for it fixes our philosophy of life to a degree which the regular routine of our busy hours cannot touch. As long as we are engaged in the daily round our minds are so occupied that the deeper questions of life have no chance to present themselves at all. When we are released, however, from the routine duties, then our minds have a chance to go adventuring. We can think things over, and so arrive at our own attitude toward our world. A man is largely what he makes himself in his leisure time, and a good thesis could be maintained on the point that the future of our society depends on what our people do with the time that is on their hands to use as they like.

In some ways such time is dangerous. An old proverb runs, "The devil finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," and most of us are well enough acquainted with ourselves to know just what it means. The devil, however, has no monopoly on spare time. It holds not only peril, but also consummate opportunity. Granted that in it are the temptation of the empty hand and the threat of the disintegrated personality, in it also are the chance for the well-stocked mind and the training of the alert body. The plotting of the crook, the slovenliness of the Sunday paper, and the sparkling talk of a good conversationalist are all products of spare hours, and may stand for symbols of their various uses. A wise society will provide leisure for its members, and at the same time will prepare them to make that leisure yield them rich returns.

In approaching the discussion of the relation between the religion of Jesus and leisure we must remind ourselves again that true Christianity stands for the widest and happiest experience possible for every individual. This is the kind of meeting of a man and his world to which Jesus referred when he said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." By that standard, leisure is rightly used when it serves to help the individual discover the sources of genuine satisfaction.

The main fallacy in our ordinary quest for pleasure lies in our expecting to find it outside of ourselves. One hardly knows whether it is more pitiful or more tragic to look upon the dissatisfied faces of a theater crowd as they settle back into their seats, turn their faces toward the rising curtain, and seem to say to the performers, "Amuse us." They expect someone to inject pleasure into them from the outside. It cannot be done. For an hour or two the stimulus of novel sensations may bring merciful forgetfulness, but, after the play is over, the cab is waiting at the curb to carry the spectator back home. The only satisfaction that can satisfy, the only amusement that can amuse, and the only pleasure that can really please, is that which is within. The sparkling springs of joy at which a man may slake his thirsty soul are in his own heart; if they be dry, then he may be lured by mirage after mirage, but he will never know abiding happiness.

Our Mecca of the pilgrims of pleasure is Times Square with its blazing lights and seductive signs. Any man is a little subnormal whose veins do not tingle with the brilliance of it all. Yet I would rather sit on the stoop of a country store and look at a meager crowd of villagers, if only I could see them out of the eyes and soul of Shakespeare, than to sit before the most gorgeous show on Broadway if I had to look at it through the surfeited sense of a Manhattan sophisticate. Chaucer could get more pleasure out of half an hour on Cheapside than the average first-nighter can get out of a whole season of Piccadilly Circus. It is what is inside a man that colors his world. We can put no more gorgeous tints into the universe than we carry on the palettes of our hearts. If we are going to enjoy life, we must cultivate the resources of joy within ourselves.

A good place to begin is with self-knowledge.

In the first place, we are on sure ground here. A man may imagine that the world upon which he looks is a figment of the imagination, he may have moods when he thinks that even his most vivid experiences are but incidents of a dream, but no man can doubt his own reality, even a dream is meaningless without a dreamer. A doubter can question many things, but he cannot question his own existence as a doubter. In an uncertain world the reality of the self is one rock of certainty upon which our feet may stand. Moreover, there is nothing more fascinating to any of us than our own character and its development. We know ourselves in a different sense from that in which we know anyone else. We know what we were, what we did, and what we might have done; the words we spoke and the words we left unspoken; what we hoped to accomplish and what we actually wrought; what we are and what we might have been; what we may yet be, and how utterly we may fall short of it. The only thing we do not know about ourselves is how we appear to others. A merciful Providence has spared us that, and yet we may gain a fair idea even of this if we are as skillful in storing the verdicts of our enemies as we are those of our friends. It is good strategy and good fun to watch oneself honestly, and to know oneself calmly.

Reduced to a discipline of understanding and control, self-knowledge is one of the major satisfactions of life. A man has learned something about living when he can chuckle at himself and at the world in the moments when he is alone.

Out of self-knowledge may come adequate self-expression. As a catchword for sophomores, self-expression does not mean much except the parading of one's eccentricities or the attempt to shock conventional society, but as a genuine ideal, it means the pouring of the fullness of one's powers into constructive effort that enriches both oneself and one's community. Somewhere in the varied activities of man there is work at which each of us is particularly apt and in the doing of which we find particular joy. That is the most favorable channel of our self-expression, the thing into which we can pour our heart and in the doing of which we can gain the deep content of a man absorbed in his task. The perfect example of it is the musician, expressing himself through control of an instrument that he originally took up from personal interest. No matter how entangled we may be in work that is monotonous during the hours of our labor, every one of us can find some activity for our leisure hours which will bring us this luxury of genuine self-expression.

The schoolboy building a radio set, the clerk haunting the public library looking up old histories, the stenographer coming home to her brush and canvas, the housewife tending her flowers are all people who have entered into the fascinating ways of self-expression. They have discovered an activity which brings to life within them a new and vivid interest in their world.

Self-expression reaches its climax in creative joy. This is the satisfaction that comes from the realization that what we are doing is well done as well as worth doing. Whoever it was that wrote the opening verses of Genesis, he knew the gratification that I am trying to describe here, for after each stage of creation he pictures the Creator surveying his handiwork and taking pride in it. "God saw that it was good." By that phrase the ancient writer put the joy of the craftsman at the very heart of the universe. At some point that joy should enter into the experience of every individual, and if the common round does not bring it, then spare time should.

The thing I am saying is that our leisure time should bring us the satisfactions that are permanent. At the basis of them are self-knowledge, self-expression, and creative joy. There is a sort of formidable sound about their names, but, in reality, they are the sources of good fun and real enjoyment. Without them all the perquisites of a civilized community are empty, with them a desert island could easily be a delightful place. In his play The Admirable Crichton James Matthew Barrie illustrates this perfectly. The characters of the drama are a noble English family and their servants, chief of whom is the butler, Crichton. As long as they are in the artificial atmosphere of civilization the members of the nobility pursue their privileged course without question and without intelligence. Thrown upon a deserted island, however, in the course of a yachting cruise, it is not long before the superiority of Crichton manifests itself, so that all the rest acknowledge him as leader and accept his orders. In the whole crowd he is the one who is undismayed, for the simple reason that he is the only one sure of himself. He knows himself, and for a brief span, at any rate, he has the fun of being the man he knows himself to be. When they return to civilization again, it is Crichton alone who is equal to bridging the awkward gap between their adventure and the renewal of their old associations. Such power as his is the birthright of every one of us, and, no matter how wearisome our routine work may be, we can discover its sources in our leisure time.

Leisure, in other words, is the time for re-creation in the deepest and best sense.

While others are pleading for the broadening of experience I would like to put in my plea for its deepening. I am not impressed by the contemplation of a man who is all breadth and no depth; he looks too uncommonly much like a coat of varnish. The secrets of the deeper life are simple enough, going back, however, to aspects of satisfaction that we are apt to overlook in the midst of the highly spiced sensationalism that surrounds us. The old quiet enjoyment of the simple things of nature, the appreciation of the loveliness and allurement of our breathing world, which waits to please us without money and without price, is an inexhaustible treasury of enjoyment for those who know how to dip in their hands. Clean laughter, the giver of true perspectives, is a music that any man may make in his own heart. Honesty with oneself, so that one is not afraid to be alone, is a beginning of that unique integrity which will discover the truth of all things. Culture, in the true definition of that much abused word, brings resources to personality that can be drawn upon indefinitely.

This culture begins with the associations of home and neighbors, those intimate places where we see humanity at its best, and learn to know men in a finer sense than that of the market-place. Books and plays, carefully chosen, bring us the privilege of conversations with fine minds and of the expression of great thoughts that stimulate us to find and to phrase the truth for ourselves. Music and painting, if we have the patience to learn their spell, open our ears and eyes to beauty. In all and through all is the quiet glory of the mystical experience that makes us sure in all things of the goodness of God.

This is leisure—not a mad chasing of will o' the wisps through the night; not a burning of the incense, electricity, to the great god, pleasure; not a straining of the nerves for some new sensation; but a quest for the good, the beautiful, and the true. Rightly used, leisure is the time when we may quietly discover the richer aspects of experiences, when we may capture the finer moods of living. It is the hour when we may become acquainted with ourselves, our world, and our God.

CONCLUSION

From Abraham to Jesus, from Jesus to William Booth, every man who has brought God near to men has been one who has lost himself in a crusade to make life more endurable for his brothers and sisters in this sublunary world. The fight of the Galilæan has for ever been against that spirit of mammon which exploits men for gain, which has no tenderness for human suffering, which is indifferent to the submerged mass of men who have no share in the choicer gifts of life. The religion of Jesus is a quest for the forgotten man, the hundredth one whom the ninety-nine, snugly housed in the fold, forget.

He who has the courage to follow the prints of the nail-pierced feet will find them leading him up old dark stairways, along dingy corridors, into rooms where little lungs are panting for fresh air that never comes to them, where little sunken eyes look out on a world whose loveliness they will never know. The feet of the Master will continually lead us into the presence of those we do not wish to remember. It is sometimes a dreadful thing to go out walking with him. For often, even when he looks upon the lilies, you will be startled to see in his eyes the shadow of tragic remembrance, and you will know that his mind is back again in the fearful slums recalling those to whom the lilies are unknown. Then you begin to understand why his heart broke.

Must a man count himself a fool because he dares to dream of a world that shall not break the heart of the Christ? We cannot so believe.

In us are intelligence enough and good will enough to build a society whose cities shall be without slums, whose markets shall be without injustice, whose loyalties shall be uncontaminated by hates, and whose highways to both the hills and the opportunities shall be open to the feet of all. To the building of that society the good Christ calls us, and his voice will never let us rest until it come. He will forever haunt the ways of mediocrity and inhumanity, flashing before us his vision of excellence and love. Jesus cannot let us rest until we bring his religion to its consummation in the humane society, which is another name for the kingdom of God.

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